The New REPUBLIC

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The Week

FROM comments on the Federal Reserve report for December, we learn that the depression is over again. Contrary to the usual seasonal trend, the index of industrial production, which had fallen ever since last May, returned to the dizzy height of 85 percent of the level attained in 1923-25, the 1929 figure being 119. We have actually got back to the status of December, 1930, one year after the depression started. On the basis of this showing we throw our hat one-half inch into the air. It returns solidly to our head, however, when we analyze the figures. The chief gain was in automobiles and in the steel needed for them. More automobile production than for the past two years was concentrated in December because more companies brought out their new models then, and could proceed to build up stocks without being impeded by a strike, as they were in December, 1933. Nobody knows how many more cars will be sold for the whole year, but conservative estimates range from five to ten percent. Rapid manufacture now therefore means almost certainly a slump in later months. And in construction, which is more important than anything else, value of contracts declined. For the last quarter as a whole, private building "was about the same as in the corresponding period of 1933, while the volume of publicly financed projects was considerably smaller than last year."

WILLIAM GREEN, president of the American Federation of Labor, came out squarely for a federal system of unemployment insurance in his testimony before the congressional committee. Since some of the leading newspapers reporting his testimony did not mention this fact, it may be interesting to quote from his prepared statement:

> Our unemployment problem is not a state problem. Labor in the United States is more mobile than in any other country in the world. It moves from state to state, from industry to industry. In a society such as this with fluid capital, migratory industries, shifting labor markets, seasonal, technological and cyclical forces, unemployment cannot be looked upon in any sense as a local, state or even regional phenomenon, to be insured on anything less than a national basis.

In default of a national system, Mr. Green preferred a system of federal grants-in-aid, with high standards for the states set by the government, such as was recommended by the Advisory Council but turned down by the administration. He also asked an increase in the period of benefits, to be financed by a payroll tax of five percent rather than three percent as in the official measure, a tax to be paid wholly by the employer without worker contribution. And he advised liberalization of the old-age-pension proposal. Labor and a majority of the experts are now known to be in advance of the administration. Why is it so timid?

SOME excessively curious diplomatic conversations are now taking place in China. They are between Japanese and Chinese officials, and their purpose is presumably to give concrete expression to the alleged new "friendly policy" of Japan. The Japanese, its is said, will first aid the Chinese to crush the Communists. They will then aid in restoring order throughout the country. They may even aid

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upon her by the European Powers—a suggestion that conveniently overlooks the fact that Japan herself has been guilty of enforcing the most outrageously unjust of all these treaties. China's northern boundaries would be definitely fixed, and, we are told, Japan would then be ready to guarantee the territorial integrity of North China. There would follow joint operations for the economic and financial development of the whole country. This is something like an agreement between a cat and a mouse to "coöperate" in having the cat eat not more than one-half the mouse. It has often been rumored that Chiang Kai-shek had secretly sold out to the Japanese, but proof of this has always been lacking. If he goes through with any such program as is now proposed, a program that would reduce all China to a status not much better than that of Manchukuo, the world will certainly believe that these rumors were correct.

MEANWHILE, an ominous silence hangs over the boundary between Jehol, which the Japanese seized by force of arms some time ago, and the next-door province of Chahar. The Nanking authorities continue to insist that they are coöperating with the Japanese in a friendly way and that no further seizure of territory is contemplated; but the public gossip of the Orient, usually far more reliable than official statements, says Japan is preparing to occupy this territory as she did Jehol and before that, Manchuria. In the February, 1935, issue of Fortune magazine, published in New York City, appears a map of China on which it is said of Chahar: "Jap officers now making reconnaissance trips in this area. Will it be next?" Fortune was published before the cables came from the Far East describing recent operations in this area; its map, in several colors, was some time on the press. Are the editors of Fortune gifted with psychic insight? Or are Japan's plans so plain that even the cartographers can take them into account?

WITHIN a few days, and possibly before this issue of The New Republic reaches its readers, it is expected that the Senate will again have ratified American entrance into the World Court. Similar action was taken early in 1926, but our elder statesmen at that time attached such crippling reservations that the other nations in the Court refused to accept them. One of these reservations provided that the Court could not undertake to render an advisory opinion in any dispute between the United States and another country unless these two Powers had agreed by special treaty to such reference—thus giving the Senate a complete veto. We also insisted that the Court should take no jurisdiction that might be interpreted as interfering with the Monroe Doctrine.

TODAY, this old battle has but a quaint historic interest. The United States has itself altered the Monroe Doctrine greatly and has submitted without audible protest to efforts of the League to end a South American war. The army of bitter isolationists in the Senate has dwindled down to a handful. Hardly anyone says any more that the Court is the back door into the League or that the United States is abandoning its sovereignty. The importance of both the League and the Court has greatly diminished in the past nine years, or rather, the world's eyes have been opened in that time to the fact that they were never so important and so valuable as most people had supposed. As matters now stand, nearly all the work of the Court consists in rendering advisory opinions. These are given only at the request of the League Council, are made to the Council, and are not binding upon anyone, including the League. In our case, not even an advisory opinion will be given without our consent. Our entrance into the Court, while wholly desirable, becomes only a polite gesture toward internationalism in an increasingly nationalistic world.

THE Federal Trade Commission, after six years of investigation, characterizes many practices of utility holding companies by the words "fraud, deceit, misrepresentation, dishonesty, breach of trust and oppression." These practices, it states, "have taken sums beyond calculation from the rate-paying and investing public." What is the remedy? The Commission recommends a combination of taxation, direct prohibitive legislation, compulsory federal licensing and federal incorporation, placing emphasis on the first two measures. It proposes six kinds of complicated taxes and twenty-nine legislative prohibitions. The Commission may this time have devised a barbed-wire entanglement through which private enterprise in utilities could not advance to its accustomed nefarious work. Indeed, the provisions are so onerous that they might force the abandonment of any attempt to combine local utilities or even to retain them in combination. But the layman is likely to reflect that the utmost possible benefit to the consuming public from elaborate regulation of this kind would not equal that to be expected from an orderly system, publicly owned, and administered in the first place for the public interest. For all the Commission's plans rest on a "fair return" on the "prudent investment," and that is sure to be higher in the long run than interest on public bond issues that are retired through sinking funds. With half the ingenuity and with less than half the cost involved in so detailed and complex a system of regulation, a feasible plan for publicly owned systems could be set up.

THE armed uprising against Huey P. Long's dictatorship in Louisiana, predicted for some time, took place last week in Baton Rouge. Five hundred National Guardsmen, called out by Huey's rubber-stamp flunkey, Governor O. K. Allen, met one hundred members of the Square Deal Association on the field of the Baton Rouge airport. The Square

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themselves behind a line of automobiles; the Guardsmen, with machine guns, began crawling toward them. The stage was all set for a miniature civil war when the Square Dealers, apparently afraid to endanger the lives of the women and children who had come out to see the battle, surrendered. Whereupon the Guardsmen, showing their usual self-control, laid down a barrage of tear gas against the crowd. Senator Long, a few hours later, had the situation under control—so completely that he was able to return to Washington. A situation such as this, however, cannot continue for long without bloodshed. The citizens, the next time, may not surrender so peacefully. Meanwhile, as the Square Dealers hunt for their missing leader, the Senator charges that a group of his enemies planned to murder him and fumes against the Standard Oil Company. It is the Standard Oil, he shouts, that fomented the present revolt. That company, to be sure, would like nothing better than to have the Kingfish deposed, and it is conceivable that it might have aided in the organization of the Square Deal Association, but the skirmish at Baton Rouge was the result of a much more bitter conflict in Louisiana. That conflict will grow increasingly bitter as time goes on and will end, obviously, only with the end of the Long dictatorship.

THE cotton-restriction policy of the A.A.A. has materially aided the Southern planters, as is proved by the overwhelming vote in favor of its continuance a short time ago. It has done little or nothing —in thousands of cases less than nothing—for the share croppers and tenant farmers, white or Negro. Where owner-operation prevails, restriction of acreage throws few off the land, but where share cropping and small tenancy prevail, as in the South, a restriction of acreage results in a restriction of the number of farmers as well. Many thousands of share croppers have been turned out to drift along the highways, kept from starvation only by the inadequate resources of local relief. The only groups in the country that have given serious attention to the plight of the tenant farmer are the Socialists and Communists, both of whom have sought to organize them. These organizations have been bitterly fought by the landowners.

PARTICULARLY acute is the situation in Arkansas, where former tenant farmers are living in hovels and working in the fields for wages of fifty cents to a dollar a day. In this area, the Socialists have helped to form the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, which has told its story in Washington, and with some effect. One of the organizers for this union, Ward H. Rodgers, a former Methodist minister, has just been sentenced, at Marked Tree, to six months in jail and a $500 fine. He was convicted as a Communist, though he is not one, and for advocating equality of treatment for whites and Negroes, as he certainly does. Needless to say, Mr. Rodgers has done ... reformer in any sense. He envisaged no ideal crime in any truly civilized community. His sentence is part of the attempt to terrorize one of the most wretchedly exploited groups in America and to force them to accept subhuman standards of life.

CALIFORNIA is not the only state where an obsolete law has been resurrected in order to send people to prison for their activities on behalf of badly exploited workers. In California, it is Communists who have fought for agricultural labor who are in danger of being railroaded to prison for long terms under the present criminal-syndicalism law. In Oregon, a similar law has been resurrected to punish radicals active in the longshoremen's strike last summer. There are nine such cases in all; three of them have already resulted in convictions, and the fourth is now under way. Ten-year sentences can be meted out under this law to persons whose only crime may have been participating in meetings of organizations "advocating the doctrine of criminal syndicalism and sabotage." This curious crime was invented to keep workers from belonging to the I.W.W., and has been so interpreted by courts as to punish persons merely for membership in a labor organization that may erroneously be believed to advocate violent revolution.

THE mortality among magazines devoted to the serious discussion of public affairs has been heavy during the depression. A disturbingly large number of them have suspended publication or have been combined with sturdier brethren or have appeared suddenly metamorphosed into magazines making a pathetic attempt to amuse a public already trained to look for its amusement elsewhere. We note with regret that The American Mercury now joins the list of the altered. For a few months, under the tutelage of Mr. Charles Angoff, it has published a large amount of interesting social, political and economic material, appropriate and valuable in a profoundly important period of transition like the present. From the preliminary announcements of the new owner and editor, it is safe to assume that it will no longer do anything it has done in the recent past.

BEFORE Mr. Angoff's brief reign as editor, The American Mercury was of course dominated from its beginning by Henry L. Mencken and completely reflected his personality, prejudices and ideas. It is one of the curiosities of journalism that for so many years the impression should have been abroad that The American Mercury under Mencken was "liberal" or even "radical." This impression, came, we think, partly from the fact that one issue was banned by the Boston censors, on the allegation of obscenity, and partly because the paper debunked so many American idols. But while Mr. Mencken took pleasure in pointing out the crudities and absurdities of American life, he was not and is not a

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to the rarity of conservative writers who are also amusing, bouncing and truculent. We admit freely that we preferred Mr. Angoff's Mercury to that of Mr. Mencken; but we feel quite certain that we shall like the new incarnation less than we did that of the Bad Boy of Baltimore.

THE publicity tie-ups in an industry as highly publicized as that of producing movies are always interesting, often jolly. Only recently, for example, it was announced that Miss Marion Davies was going to work for Warner Brothers, which means a good job for Miss Davies. Miss Davies is known to Mr. William Randolph Hearst, and vice versa; it is no secret that they get on. Mr. Arthur Brisbane works for Mr. Hearst, sometimes very hard. Any friend of Mr. Hearst's, etc. Now "Devil Dogs of the Air" is the first picture that the Warners have been putting their really big-time publicity behind since signing on Miss Davies. And "Devil Dogs of the Air," made with Warner stars, direction and photography, out of the old Warner service script, is now announced as "the first Cosmopolitan production for Warner Brothers." Oddly enough, one of the prize exhibits in all this pre-release ballyhoo is a good portion of a widely syndicated column, written by Mr. Arthur Brisbane, commending the Warner people very highly. In it nothing is said about Miss Davies. Nothing is said about Cosmopolitan. Nothing is said about "Here Comes the Navy" (or others preceding it), of which the new film is merely a repeater. Mr. Brisbane's splash is strictly in the big waters of national politics; it is a stern reminder to "Congressmen and Governors of states," who "will be humiliated by the knowledge that among the world's important nations we stand last in airplane defense." (Mr. Brisbane may have taken the trouble to attend a showing of the film: he certainly could not be cajoled or bullied into coming to any such private screening of "Dealers in Death," which was of enough importance to Congressmen, etc., to be run off for a Senate Committee. Very very busy, Mr. Brisbane was.) "Warner Brothers," says Mr. Brisbane, coming to a final halt, "deserve thanks for producing a picture that will stimulate patriotism, and make the nation think of air defense." So thank you, Warner Brothers, and thank *you*, Mr. Brisbane, for a very delightful time.

ONCE in a while something happens that shows how the little wheels go round inside the big ones. Racine, Wisconsin, was the scene of a brief Communist-clean-up campaign. A general ban was placed upon Communist meetings. The local organizer, Sam Herman, was kidnaped and beaten. When he went to the police station to swear out a complaint against the kidnapers he was arrested on a charge of criminal libel—he had said he thought the chief of police knew something about the kidnaping. When he was released in $2,500 bail, bricks were promptly thrown through the windows of two

AT THIS point George Wilbur, an accountant, decided that the Racine authorities were just a little too complacent. He spread the word that an imaginary uncle of his up at Waukesha had a lot of labor trouble and would be glad to get in touch with the efficient people running things in Racine. In a few days one Nick Bins came up to see him in Waukesha. Mr. Bins offered the highest references. He said the Racine Chamber of Commerce had hired him to beat up Herman. He offered for a modest fee to beat up the agitator troubling Mr. Wilbur's imaginary uncle. The cost need not be high because Mr. Bins always enjoyed the cordial coöperation of the police and the leading business men of a town. In Racine, for instance, one of the automobile agencies had been glad to place fifty cars at his disposal if there were that many Communists in need of a ride. As final confirmation a telephone call was put through to the Chamber of Commerce at Racine. The Chamber assured Mr. Wilbur that Bins had performed "jobs like that" and "knew how to handle them." Mr. Wilbur turned this neat little confession over to the police and willy-nilly they were forced to arrest Bins. What is now worrying the little fascists of Racine is whether Bins will keep his mouth shut and take the rap or talk and involve his smart employers.

WHEN the textile workers called off their general strike last September, President Roosevelt promised them three surveys, to be used as a basis for determining whether the industry can afford to increase wages and better working conditions. Two of these surveys have now been completed—the Department of Labor's study of earnings of textile workers and the Federal Trade Commission's study of profits in the industry. It is unlikely that the 500,000 men and women who were on strike will be greatly surprised by the discovery of the Department of Labor that their earnings were "notoriously low." Commenting on the effects of the Textile Code the report declares:

> The feeling that the code actually provides for a wage of $12 a week in the South and $13 in the North is widespread, though false. These are only the maximum possible earnings. . . .
>
> Actually, the average textile worker during the first year of the code never averaged more than $9.65 a week, or $575 a year.
>
> Due to the code, weekly earnings in August, 1934, were 9 percent lower than a year before in the North, and 17 percent lower in the South.

While it is good to have these facts on the record, this does not mean, of course, that the textile workers are any closer to decent wages. The report of the Federal Trade Commission, issued last December, was an ambiguous document, showing large profits in some cases, chiefly in the South, and also some losses, chiefly in the North. The third report —that on the stretch-out—will not be concluded probably for several months. Thus, even at the

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earliest, the government will not be in a position to take any action on behalf of the textile workers until spring. And it is unlikely that it will do so then, since the N.R.A. is opposed to forcing wage rates on employers. Meanwhile, the hope of the textile workers that these surveys would be helpful in arousing public opinion on their side—perhaps in the event of another strike—seems to have been defeated by the utterly inadequate reports of the surveys carried in the daily press. The stories on the Department of Labor report, though indicating that textile wages were low, failed to give even the data on weekly wages!

Five Billlons for What?

WE HOPE that the Senate, before it passes the appropriation bill for public-works relief, will find out from the President how he expects to spend the $4,800,000,000 that it makes available. This desire is based, not on abstract constitutional grounds, such as the separation of powers, the impropriety of delegating legislative functions and the like, but on the belief that the President himself does not know how the money is to be spent and that the mind of the administration ought to be much clearer on the subject than it is if the whole program is not to be a colossal blunder.

Congress in the past has leaned much too far in the direction of making only specific appropriations to be handled by particular agencies and bureaus for narrowly defined purposes. This is one of the greatest sources of log-rolling, of political favoritism, of governmental inefficiency. Executives should be allowed a much larger discretion in the spending of money than has been the habit before the present administration. The congressional controversy over whether Mr. Ickes or Mr. Hopkins or somebody else is to spend the relief funds does not interest us in the least; we should dislike to see the money tied up by ill considered legislative limitations. In the end it will probably be better to make the appropriation as a lump sum, to be spent according to the President's discretion, as he requests. But if Congress is to make this concession, it ought to do so with full assurance that Mr. Roosevelt knows what he is about and will exercise the discretion within limits that are practicable and will lead to desirable results.

In his message dealing with this subject, the President laid down seven general principles that he proposed to follow. But there was scarcely a hint concerning how he proposed to follow them. Principles are no good unless they are embodied in operative plans. What main projects are ready? How much money and how many men will they take? How can the skills of the unemployed be matched against the specific requirements for man power? How many of the unemployed will be left over, because they cannot be fitted into the works scheme, and how will relief for them be handled? What is the time schedule of the program? A public-works plan even of such broad specifications cannot be expected to be carried through without changes arising from unexpected circumstances, especially in a time of emergency. But nothing will result except confusion unless a plan of some sort is used as a guide. If the President's principles were merely to serve as a basis for the future policies of a decade, it might not be necessary to insist on an operative plan, but since the need is to do something within the next year, a real plan is urgently required.

We emphasize this point as strongly as possible at this juncture, because the most superficial inspection of the President's seven general principles raises strong doubts as to whether there exists any plan at all. If there were such a plan, these particular principles could scarcely have been enunciated, because, as The New Republic demonstrated in an editorial, "Mr. Roosevelt's New Order," in the issue of January 16, the principles appear to be mutually contradictory.

How, for instance, can the administration possibly employ directly anything like 3,500,000 jobless persons on public works, if these works are to be at once permanently useful, self-liquidating and non-competitive with private enterprise? Are there enough specific projects of this description to employ so many, and are those who are unemployed qualified to undertake them? When to these requirements are added the others—that wages are to be below those paid by private employers, that the projects should use as large as possible a proportion of direct labor, that they should be capable of being tapered off if private employment revives, that they should be located where the most unemployment exists, and that the program of the National Resources Board should be used in choosing them, one wonders whether there is a single project in the country that would satisfy all the conditions at once. The whole business begins to look like a castle in the clouds.

The Senate Committee ought to ask the representatives of the administration about each of the possible types of activity. What is the housing program, for instance? How much is to be spent on it, where are the projects to be, what orders will they create for the materials industries, how many unemployed building-trades workers will they use, to what extent will they and should they be self-liquidating, and can they pay less than the going rate of wages? Are apartments to be left without roofs if the building industry revives before they are finished? What is the budget for erosion control? Will unemployed tailors or bookkeepers be expected to build rural electric lines? What is the test by which it will be determined who are "unemployable" and therefore to be turned over to local relief? Is a surplus coal miner who can mine coal but is inexpert at eliminating grade crossings to be classed as unemployable? How many will there be who cannot be fitted into the government plan, and

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where are they, and do the local governments where they are have the resources to care for them?

The administration has balked at anything like a production plan for industry in general, but with all its talk of planning it surely cannot escape responsibility for a genuine operative plan for the immediate activities under its own jurisdiction, to be financed by federal appropriation. Here a happy-go-lucky, confused attack is inexcusable. Congress may intelligently approve appropriations for work relief in so far as the President can show that he knows what is going to be done with the money and what will be the results, in relation to the chief ends in view. He ought to be able to show this with blueprints, estimates of cost, statistical tables of classified employment, time schedules. In so far as there is no such planning, Congress ought to make clear that it expects the money to be used for adequate relief of those who do not have jobs either public or private, relief effectively organized by experts who make that their business.

The Publishers Crack Down

IN A SPECIAL letter to Chairman Biddle last week, President Roosevelt informed the National Labor Relations Board that it had no authority to hear any labor disputes, even on appeal, in any industry whose code provides for the "final adjudication" of such controversies by tribunals set up within the industry. All the Board can do is to investigate charges of unfairness by such tribunals and report to the President—an undignified, extra-legal and probably futile proceeding. It is no secret that Mr. Roosevelt's letter, though mentioning no specific code, was written under extreme pressure from the newspaper publishers. With the threat that they would withdraw from the N.R.A., they insisted that "exclusive and final" jurisdiction over all labor relations be placed in the hands of the Newspaper Industrial Board, an agency of their Code Authority dominated, of course, by them. To this amazing demand the President capitulated—without, it should be noted, so much as giving the newspaper workers a chance to protest. "It is impossible to dodge the fact," said Heywood Broun, president of the American Newspaper Guild, "that the newspapers publishers have cracked down on the President of the United States, and that Franklin D. Roosevelt has cracked up."

Obviously, the circumstances and the implications of this action by the President contain a threat to labor that extends far beyond the newspaper industry, though it is the newspaper workers who are most vitally and most immediately affected. For the real significance in Mr. Roosevelt's surrender to the publishers is that, in making it, he has established two extremely dangerous precedents. He has, in the first place, stripped the National Labor Relations Board of its independent status—an independence that he himself promised it last June—and, secondly, he has denied editorial and other employees the right to have their grievances heard by an impartial tribunal.

The first of these precedents is clearly the more serious. It not merely circumscribes the usefulness of the Labor Relations Board (restricted as that usefulness already is), but it confirms the fear that the President will warp his labor policy to suit those business groups that can apply the greatest pressure. In this instance the publishers applied enough pressure to force Mr. Roosevelt to repudiate completely his promises to labor of last June. At that time, in establishing the National Labor Relations Board, he publicly declared:

> It is provided that persons and agencies in the executive branch of the government shall not disturb the exclusive jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Board and such other industrial, regional or special boards as I may, in accordance with the recommendations of the National Board, designate or establish; and that all persons or agencies in the executive branch of the government shall respect the findings and orders of such boards.
>
> This rule is of universal application and includes within its scope all permanent and emergency governmental agencies.

These words are plain enough and were fully justified—indeed, almost obligatory—under the powers conferred on Mr. Roosevelt by Congress in Public Resolution Forty-four. This resolution empowered the President to establish a board or boards to hear and adjudicate "any controversies arising under Section 7a." The obvious intent of Congress was to provide for a sort of Supreme Court for labor cases, where workers could come when they felt they had not received fair decisions in the regional or industrial boards. But whatever the intent, it has now been nullified in some ten industries, including publishing, which have provided in their codes for the "final adjudication" of labor grievances. Moreover, the door is now opened for others to go and do likewise. By having a magical provision for "final adjudication" added to their codes, they, like the publishers, may get a free hand to deal with their employees as they choose.

That the newspaper owners now have a free hand is no exaggeration. The New Republic has already discussed in detail the inequities of the Newspaper Industrial Board. It is nothing more than an instrument of the publishers' Code Authority and is completely discredited among newspaper workers. Composed of four publisher and four labor representatives, the board functions by majority rule. This means that the four publisher members have the power to block any action they choose—even to exclude evidence in a hearing—merely by voting together. It is a power, it may be added, that they have repeatedly used in the few cases that the Newspaper Guild has brought before the board. A bipartisan board may, on the surface, look fair, but in practice, since neither side has the power to compel it to act, it leaves actual authority with those

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who through ownership of the means of production have executive authority. Clearly, no better machinery could be devised for producing interminable delays and almost inevitable deadlocks—two results that are highly advantageous to any employer involved in a labor controversy and are virtually the equivalent of defeat for any worker who has been discharged for union activity and must wait, month after month, in the hope that he will get his job back. The board, of course, has no power to enforce its decisions but refers them to the Code Authority, which is composed entirely of publishers!

Compelling the American Newspaper Guild or any union to take its complaints to such an agency, without even the right of appeal, is nothing less than delivering it into the hands of the enemy. Mr. Roosevelt defends his action on the basis that the government must live up to the "letter of the agreement" in signing the code. This excuse is apparently inspired by the special pleading of the publishers. Their arguments, which both the President himself and his National Labor Relations Board have demolished most convincingly, have been played up in grand style in the daily press. According to the publishers, they were promised "exclusive and final" jurisdiction over all labor relations when their code was approved by the President. They also point, with a great deal of patriotic agitation, to Article VII of the newspaper code, which declares that those subscribing to it do not "consent to the imposition of any requirements that might interfere with the constitutional guarantee of the freedom of the press." Both of these provisions, they assert, have been violated by the National Labor Relations Board in assuming jurisdiction in the Dean Jennings case. To permit an independent labor board to hear newspaper cases, they would have us believe, jeopardizes the "free press."

Of course, President Roosevelt disposed of this flimsy contention when, in signing the newspaper code, he described Article VII as "pure surplusage." Nobody, he said, "waives any constitutional rights by assenting to a code," but the freedom of expression guaranteed by the Constitution is "not the freedom to work children, or do business in a fire trap." In brief, he refused to permit the publishers to use the bogey, freedom of the press, to absolve themselves of all responsibility for the welfare of their employees. Presumably, too, they were not to use this pretext to deny newspaper workers the rights promised in Section 7a.

But even if the publishers are right in saying that they were given to understand that no independent labor tribunal—such as the National Labor Relations Board—was to exercise jurisdiction in their field, this hardly justifies Mr. Roosevelt's present intervention, unless we are to assume that once a bad bargain has been made with an industry to bring it under a code, that bargain must be perpetuated without change in order to keep it under a code. Unfortunately, this is the disturbing policy that Mr. Roo[illegible]t

though certainly it is not the policy that he need follow. Both the National Industrial Recovery Act and the newspaper code give him specific power to modify or cancel any code provision. And in Public Resolution Forty-four, Congress gave him undisputed authority to establish an independent labor tribunal for all codified industries. The National Labor Relations Board, in its decision in the Jennings case, declared that "if and when the President attempts to impose a modification that really does abridge the freedom of the press it will be time enough to invoke the constitutional guarantees. No genuine issue of the freedom of the press can be fabricated out of the Executive Order giving the National Labor Relations Board authority" to hear complaints arising under Section 7a.

Despite these perfectly valid reasons for putting the publishers in their place, Mr. Roosevelt yielded to them completely, giving them a superprivileged status among employers in the matter of labor relations. Whether he abdicated the broad powers given him by Congress is a matter that may yet be determined in the courts. Meanwhile, his performance, though bitterly disappointing to the newspaper men and women of the country, is not without its value to them. It vividly demonstrates the extreme tenuousness of "rights" that are protected merely by a government board and can be nullified overnight by an Executive Order. It reveals more fully, too, the meaning of the New Deal's contribution to national planning—the so-called partnership of government and business. Hardly a day has passed since the birth of the N.R.A. that newspaper workers have not had to write thousands of words describing, explaining, even eulogizing this partnership. Last week, in their own industry, they suddenly saw it take on the aspects of a corporation—with the organized publishers holding voting control and the President merely giving effect to the wishes of the Board of Directors. These lessons are not likely to be soon forgotten, and the answer to them is to strengthen the American Newspaper Guild so that it can defend the rights of its members without benefit of boards. That, in the last analysis, is the only way in which labor can advance.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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That Promise of American Life[1]

LONG AGO, in 1909, Herbert Croly published his "Promise of American Life," in which he made a critical appraisal of American institutions and ideas. Through the maze of his time, he was trying to peer into the hidden future of the United States.

Today Croly's volume would probably be assigned to the literature of reform, to which farewell and all that was said with an air of omniscient finality on the eve of the greatest wave of reform in American history, called the New Deal. The very title of his book is now anathema to what may be characterized as the Sure-Fire School of wits, essayists, novelists, literary critics, logic choppers, dialecticians and ritual reciters. Is it not daily dinned into our ears by this School that there is no promise in American life? Are we not told almost hourly that America is hopeless, infantile and incorrigible—a cultural vacuum, in short? Are we not informed that the "idea of progress"—the progressive unfoldment of promise in time—is a false and childish idea borrowed from the bankrupt bourgeois? Are we not handed all this on the morning platter of essays and book reviews? Perhaps the most succinct statement of the case was made a few years ago by a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in the following form: "We might make something out of America if it were not for the old Americans."

In fine, there is no promise in American life, there is nothing; and yet something is to be made out of nothing by our dialectical prestidigitators through absent treatment, with the aid of Stalin or Trotsky, or Mussolini or Hitler, as the case may be. And to this view of American life a continuous contribution is also made by British lecturers and critics who (at a price) instruct American audiences in the true, the beautiful and the good (as illustrated in Manchester and Birmingham) and entertain those Americans who prefer prostration to standing on their feet.

Now, it would be absurd, of course, to deny that the United States is an offshoot of European culture and that it draws heavily upon Europe for knowledge and ideas. The conception of America as a self-constituted, hermit-kingdom is false to facts, and the scorn that many Americans pour on the Old World is an evidence of infantilism, not of strength. It would be better still if the United States would draw heavily also upon the culture of Old Japan and Old China for conceptions of good living and the relation of the arts to the good life. Those Americans who know Europe and the Orient best will quickly admit that their country is provincial in many respects, too provincial, although this failing is not peculiar to the United States.

Nevertheless, the point that Croly was trying to make is real and worthy of reconsideration, whatever criticism may be brought against his method and his conclusions. The point is that there is promise in American life and that whatever may be the achievements of the United States in the future, great or small, they must come out of American life—institutions and ideas, people and land. In other words, Croly did not believe that something could be made out of nothing even by the most competent medicine men, adept in absent treatment. The ideas that are "imported" from Europe, if they amount to anything, must be objectified in transformed opinions, habits and practices on this continent amid the American heritage. Indeed, the surest defense of these ideas is that they grow naturally out of our own soil, though perhaps garbed in different foliage. How would it be possible to "import" European ideas and a few million superior Europeans into a desert waste, inhabited by a hundred million "infants," and make its culture blossom as the rose?

Croly, in truth, had a realistic view of historical processes. History in the United States, as elsewhere, is a stormy unfolding of ideas and interests, in conflict and tension, presenting antitheses in thought and experience, and yet enclosed in a larger unity. Ideas, whether imported or locally developed, do not alone make history. They are always associated with interests, material and substantial. Interests alone do not make history. They are always associated with ideas.

Ideas may be carried to and fro in the world in books and in heads, but material interests and their possessors have a geographical location—in particular societies—the products of a long historical past. And in the United States, for weal or woe, there is a heritage of ideas and interests, marked by certain characteristics that may be called American, at least in a geographical sense and in respect of state organization.

Whether ideas or interests are the more powerful in the making of history may be left for scholastics to debate, along with the chicken and the egg. As Marx and Engels truly say in that neglected but witty book, "The Holy Family," "The 'idea' has always made itself ridiculous in so far as it has been detached from 'interest.' On the other hand, it is easy to understand that every widespread 'interest,' that every 'interest' which is historically valid diffuses itself, when it first appears

[1] This article is the second of a special group by various writers, prepared at the invitation of The New Republic in commemoration of its twentieth anniversary. The third in the group, which will appear soon, is "Is the Economic System Self-Adjusting," by John

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on the world stage, into the 'idea,' and thus greatly transcends its concrete limits and coalesces with the general human interest." Whatever ideas are imported from Europe or the Orient to the United States will, if they survive, inexorably become associated with the configurations and energies of American culture and sink into American interests conceived as the cultural heritage.

This is not to be taken as implying that American ideas are particularities that can be wholly isolated from European and Oriental ideas and given classifications, like red and green eggs on Easter day. It simply means that American ideas are in American heads, on this continent, in this social and economic heritage, and are linked with American interests, in the geographical and national sense.

Such is, in essence, the so-called materialistic interpretation of history, as distinguished from the metaphysical interpretation. Doubtless it would be more accurate to say, the positive and realistic interpretation of history; for "materialism" has narrow mechanical connotations and must be rejected as Marx rejected Feuerbach. As Marx said in this connection: "The materialist doctrine of the transformation of circumstances and education forgets that circumstances must be altered by men and that the educator must be educated."

Such, to repeat, is the realistic interpretation of American history. Ideas and interests evolve together. This interpretation was not a "discovery" of Marx and Engels out of the blue. It was foreshadowed clearly by Aristotle in his "Politics," especially Book V. It was developed by Machiavelli, Locke, Hume, Montesquieu and James Madison, the Father of the Constitution of the United States. It was widely accepted by educated men and women long before Marx was born. It is to the credit of Marx that he recognized its significance and applied it on a large scale with an amazing wealth of illustrations. Marx did not begin as a boy to study Marx, like many of the disciples whom he would doubtless disown today. He began by studying the wisdom of the ancients and his contemporaries. Long before he wrote his draft of the "Communist Manifesto" and began work on "Capital," Marx had laboriously read and digested writings of Aristotle, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Rousseau, Montesquieu and Machiavelli. He had already read and digested a German translation of Thomas Hamilton's work on "Men and Manners in America," from which he got the typical English view of this "dollar-grubbing country." (Rjazanov, "Marx-Engels Gesamtausgabe," 1, 2, ii, pp. 107-154.) Marx's acquaintance with Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Russian and English, as well as his native tongue and his wide searches in history, gave him a vast array of ideas and facts closed to most American students who fondly imagine that they *know* their Marx.

This realistic interpretation of history, well known to Greeks and Romans, to European thinkers from Machiavelli onward, and to the Fathers of the American Republic, requires us to conceive history as a movement and conflict of ideas and interests and to believe that the promise of American life, whatever it may be, will come out of the movement and conflict of ideas and interests in the United States. Nothing can come out of nothing; wheat will not grow in sand. If there is promise of any kind for the future in America, that promise inheres in the past and present of American history. Such European ideas as may be imported, as far as they are effective here, will be transmuted in the alembic of American ideas and interests in their historical setting and geographical location.

What then is the order of the day for those who look to a better future, to a society in which men and women may experience themselves as human beings? This is the supreme question for those who are by fate Americans in nationality, not Italians, Japanese, Germans or Russians.

The first task is an intensive study of American history as movement and conflict of ideas and interests, with a view to discovering what are the characteristics of American society that must condition every effort to realize any promise for American life. And the best beginning is prolonged and assiduous study of the fathers and mothers of the American Republic. Hamilton, Gouverneur Morris, Madison, Jefferson, Mercy Warren and Abigail Adams, for example. Unfortunately no comprehensive history of their ideas and institutions is now available, but the sources are abundant and easily accessible. From this beginning the study must be carried down, in the same spirit, to the latest day. Then this work in books should be supplemented by wide travel in trains, automobiles, airplanes, and by living contact with all sorts and conditions of people—bourgeois of all types, miners, share croppers, lumber jacks, well drillers, farmers and hill billies. As Louis Adamic and Sherwood Anderson have demonstrated abundantly, one hour with a brakeman who works on the railroad all the livelong day is worth more for a realistic interpretation of America than forty days and nights among the metaphysicians of the Sure-Fire revolutionary doctrine. But as yet the great knower and interpreter of American life has not appeared among us.

Although this forthspeaker has not come, enough is known of American history and life to warrant a few generalizations in tentative form at least. The first is that the United States is not Italy, Russia, Germany or Great Britain; that is to say, it is not feudal and clerical in the roots of its economy and its thought. In land tenure, class arrangements and popular ideologies there are no feudal or clerical origins and remainders worthy of practical consideration. This is a fact of immense significance to which little attention has been given by those who write glibly on American life.

To be sure, the cry will come from one quarter that feudalism and clericalism, with their ideologies and theologies, have been extirpated in Europe by the "bourgeois"

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alarm. There has been no absolute break in European history. The triumph of the bourgeois in politics, such as it has been, has not marked the complete destruction of feudalism and clericalism, but has been accompanied by an absorption and assimilation of elements from those sources of culture. Neither in practice nor in thought has there been an absolute break. The feudal interest is still powerful in the government of Great Britain. Marxism stems from Hegelianism, which in turn stemmed from theology. There is, as Schumpeter shows, a powerful element of feudalism in what is called capitalistic imperialism.

Divorced from the feudal and theological heritage, American life has been in the main hard, economic and realistic—a conquest of material things, and American thought has been essentially empirical, not metaphysical and theological. It is largely for this reason that European visitors, with their feudal and theological hangovers, have been almost unanimous in calling Americans "money grubbers." To have food, clothing, shelter, comforts and conveniences has been an essential preoccupation of Americans.

The outstanding positive characteristic of American civilization, then, is preoccupation with economy in practice and empiricism and humanism in thought. Mass production, engineering and gigantic organization have been the outward manifestations of this primary American interest. So efficient have been performances in specific industries and so great have been accomplishments in large-scale production that Soviet Russia, under Lenin's early guidance, turned to the United States for evidence of what can and must be done to bring great technology into full use in mass production for masses.

In this connection three fundamental ideas have taken form in the United States in recent years and are finding ever deeper lodgment in the American mind: (1) It is possible for great technology to provide a high standard of life for the whole mass of the American people, if run at full tempo; (2) on the side of engineering rationality, the immediate task is to make a standard-of-life budget for the whole mass of the people and to indicate the technological operations necessary to bring that standard into being through management and labor; (3) the fullest possible mass production cannot be effected under inherited capitalistic practices and the latter must give way to any extent required to fulfill the law of mass-production economy.

To state the case in simpler form: Americans are now asking themselves three questions: What do we need in the way of food, clothes, shelter, comforts and conveniences for a decent, universal standard of life? What natural resources, technical arts and managerial skills do we have for supplying these needs? Shall we not call our civilization a failure if it cannot bring the economy of abundance into realization?

These are central, upthrusting ideas of American physical roots. Nor can they be stated in any ideological, theological or metaphysical forms that convey anything but nonsense to the American people; for the simple reason that the ideological heritage of the United States differs fundamentally from that of Europe.

Immediately the stereotyped ideological reply will come from the medicine men of the Sure-Fire School: "That's all very well, but *how* are you going to carry these ideas into effect? You must make the proletariat class-conscious, organize a third, fourth or fifth party, or splinter. You must rush into every strike or disturbance, no matter who started it or what are the ends of the immediate leaders. You must slam the capitalists, and wage verbal war on Frances Perkins and Jane Addams. For God's sake *do* something."

This reply is not to be treated disrespectfully or scornfully, even if it smells of the medicine man's incense. The history to be made here will include many things, persons, events and agitations. Yet one rejoinder to the thesis of the Sure-Fire School might be the reply of Karl Marx to the minority of the Communist League, which nearly a century ago had its London branch, properly enough, in Windmill Street:

> The minority has a dogmatic outlook instead of a critical one, an idealistic outlook instead of a materialist one. It makes will the motive force of the revolution, instead of actual relations. . . . You, on the other hand, say to the workers: "We must attain power at once, or else we may just as well go to sleep." . . . Just as the democrats have sanctified the word "people," so you sanctify the word "proletariat." Like the democrats, you subordinate revolutionary development to revolutionary phrase-making.

Nobody in the United States knows enough to state the Q. E. D. of the American problem: How to give the most expeditious effect to the idea of bringing great technology into full use in providing the posited standard of life for the American people. But one thing is certain: the problem must be stated in language that corresponds to the inherited phraseologies and ideologies of the American people, and it must find in American consciousness a lodgment deep enough and wide enough to set in train the forces of realization. The idea must be formulated so realistically and with such ethical power, in relation to the objective social order of the United States, and presented so strategically, that it will, in the competition of ideas and interests which is history, rise to a place of predominance in the minds of that part of the American people which has the capacity to think, to resolve and to govern. Exactly when and how this promise of American life will come to realization in the long and tangled processes of history cannot be discovered by any methods of empirical inquiry or dialectical reasoning now available to the human mind. Omniscience, unfortunately or otherwise, seems to be denied to men and women, although many speak

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CHARLES A. BEARD

Still Forgotten

UNDER the new relief program proposed in the President's message of January 4 the Forgotten Man will get the little end of the stick. The federal government hopes to provide for the able-bodied, but the million and a half others now on relief are to be thrown back on the mercies of private charities and the overseers of the poor. "Common sense tells us," said the President, "that the wealth necessary for this task existed and still exists in the local community, and the dictates of sound administration require that this responsibility be in the first instance a local one."

That the President could make two such extraordinary statements is a serious indictment of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. The President listens to his counsellors. He consults frequently with Administrator Hopkins. Administrator Hopkins apparently has no far-reaching vision of public-welfare needs and has simply incorporated into his successive experiments the erroneous points of view held by the President and by other liberal persons who have never studied the problem.

A basic error in the present plan is the belief that most of the able-bodied unemployed can be put to work. No doubt large numbers of them can be put on payrolls, but they cannot be put to work in any realistic sense. The vast majority of work projects involve manual labor. Men from the clothing trades who have sat cross-legged over their sewing for twenty years are asked to shoulder a pick and shovel. Accountants, drug clerks and floor-walkers are set at hoisting concrete. Small wonder that the results are so meager. There are 1,200,000 unemployed women on the relief rolls. The majority were formerly unskilled or semi-skilled workers in manufacturing and trade and no one has thus far suggested any work program that could absorb more than a minute fraction of the group.

The first skirmish with a work program under the C.W.A. should have provided ample evidence on this score. In one Iowa county, where grubbing stumps is commonly contracted for at $3 per stump, the average cost per stump under the C.W.A. was $72. The men who can't do their work and the men who dally inevitably set the pace for the entire crew. The truth is that any public-works program will and should leave large numbers of able-bodied but improperly qualified persons on relief. To sustain the morale of the workers and retain public approval, the men should be selected on the basis of fitness by the public employment offices.

Yet if the proposed works program is carefully planned and wisely administered it should make a large dent in present relief rolls, at, of course, greatly increased cost. But it will by no means absorb 3,500,000 persons, as the President hopes, unless the farcical performance of the C.W.A. is repeated with the wholesale transfer to payrolls of persons who should remain on relief.

The view that local authorities can finance the care of the unemployables and of the able-bodied not absorbed by public works can only be described as fantastic. It is difficult to understand how Mr. Hopkins, with his extensive research staff, could have permitted the President to entertain any such notion.

Local financing implies raising most of the money, not where resources are most abundant, but where the need is greatest. A hasty balancing of needs and resources in such states as South Dakota and West Virginia reveals the bankruptcy of this view. Further, since local municipal governments derive two-thirds of their funds, and rural areas 90 percent, from the general property tax, the small home owner and farmer is evidently expected to shoulder the major part of the cost. The present situation with respect to the general property tax is too well known to need restatement. Between 1930 and 1933 in cities of 50,000 and over, delinquency in payment of taxes increased from 12.9 percent to 26.3 percent.

The six or seven states that enjoy more than half the national income can perhaps assist their local governments. But many of the states derive their revenue from the same source as the local governments—namely, the general property tax. Such states cannot provide any substantial sums on a continuing basis. The answer is clear. If federal funds are withdrawn, the degradation of the lowest stratum of the forgotten men will touch new depths.

Implicit in the President's plan is the conviction that local relief is better than federal relief. On numerous occasions he has expressed this view. Actually the reverse is true. No relief is so bad as local relief. We have in this country an uninterrupted record extending back three hundred years to prove it. During this entire period in almost every part of the country local relief has been a public disgrace. It has been doled out from dingy courthouse basements and jails by petty martinets. So long as it persists, the needy in most jurisdictions will receive miserable doles and will be subjected to affronts by irresponsible and blundering officials.

Federal and state supervision in the past two and a half years has reversed this current. With all its present defects, public relief has nevertheless been more decently and more humanely administered than at any time in the preceding three hundred years. Now it is proposed that these long overdue

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the credulous view that all work or near-work is constructive and that all direct relief undermines character.

Actually there is nothing holy about work and nothing unholy about properly administered relief. Direct relief, if well administered, is very much less demoralizing than the shadow-boxing with the pretense of jobs that characterized so much of the C.W.A. The farmers have recently received substantial sums for restricting their labor. There is no evidence that these rewards for idleness have undermined the sturdy yeoman spirit. The farmers are, in fact, happier and in more courageous mood than they have been in a long time. Other classes of needy citizens are entitled to similar treatment. Under the President's proposed plan it is to be hoped that all who are qualified or who can be whipped into shape will be offered work through the regular employment offices. The others should be maintained on direct relief largely at federal expense.

The President's preference for local relief also undoubtedly springs from a belief that federal relief funds are peculiarly subject to abuse. No one questions the reality of this danger, but the answer is not to return to a system long since discredited. The answer is to provide proper safeguards and adequate supervision. Similar dangers have been met before in connection with federal grants for highways, for agricultural extension and home-demonstration work, and for protection of maternity and infancy. Each of these services has met with conspicuous success and widespread public approval. Federal funds can safely be spent in local jurisdictions if there is a stable policy in Washington and a competent staff to supervise operations in the states and counties.

The F.E.R.A. has never been willing to devote its undivided attention to the humdrum task of administering relief. "This is a great adventure" and "I don't like this relief business" are the sentiments most frequently expressed by Administrator Hopkins. Perhaps Mr. Hopkins has not yet found his proper niche in the New Deal; there is no evidence that he has a clear vision of the permanent welfare needs of the country. If he has such a plan, he has failed signally in impressing his views upon the President. Up to the present, Mr. Roosevelt's pronouncements on relief have been as antiquated and parochial as those of his predecessor.

The administration should cease using the F.E.R.A. as a vehicle for experimental measures of recovery and should ask it to settle down to the task of organizing an effective permanent welfare program that will rescue the Forgotten Man from the insults and hazards of local relief. If the relief program can be reduced to small compass by an extensive and well administered program of public works, so much the better. But the public-works program should be regarded not as an alternative but as a supplementary scheme.

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Radio's Fight for News

NEWS WILL out, even by radio. The Radio Press Bureau, which is controlled by Associated Press, United Press and International News, has been trying to establish a dictatorship of the blue pencil over the microphone. It is still attempting to bottle the news and administer it in five-minute doses only twice a day. But the microphone is rebelling. Surprisingly enough, the first and most militant attack upon the powerful press-service censorship has been led by New England. Of recent significance, pointing perhaps to the collapse of newsprint's effort to control radio, is the defection of the great metropolitan station, WOR, from the newspaper-radio-chain agreement and its present broadcast of news gathered by the rapidly growing independent service of Transradio Press.

Listeners have been conscious of the inadequacy of radio's news service since the first of March, 1934. Numerous caustic complaints have been received by broadcasting stations. For a time many of them refused to use the predigested summaries of stale news prepared by the Press Bureau's New York office. More recently the Press Bureau has been forced to stay on the job during the day and issue nervous flashes on important spot news. Something akin to hysteria colored the voice that interrupted a Bach fugue to announce that the sun was shining in St. Louis and a ball game would probably be played. Press Radio and its parent newsprint organizations are beginning to get worried.

Before March 1 of last year most large dailies broadcast at regular periods several times a day. Country people as well as urban housewives whose husbands did not bring home a newspaper until evening were informed of the day's events as they occurred. While interest in moronic programs waned, thousands continued to tune in periodically to learn what the rest of the world was doing. The service was not of a nature to inspire fan mail, and few newspapers—or listeners—realized how well rooted the habit had become until suddenly it was announced that news broadcasting thereafter would be limited to five minutes twice daily, twenty words to an item and a maximum of six hundred words for each period.

The history of the events that led to the present crisis puts the responsibility on the Associated Press and its fear of radio. In February, 1933, this organization sued station KSOO, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and the court restrained the station from using, within twenty-four hours after its first appearing in print, any news released by the A.P. A few weeks later, when the A.P. gave its annual luncheon to publishers in New York, J. C. Stahlman, head of The Nashville Banner and the Southern Newspaper Publishers' Association, returned the courtesy by offering a resolution prohibit-

ing any A.P. subscriber from furnishing radio chains with news or, if the newspaper was a broadcaster itself, from using more than a limited number of words, while giving the A. P. full credit. Adolph Ochs, publisher of The New York Times, was the only guest quoted as objecting to the resolution. With characteristic bluntness he warned them against sticking their heads in the sand, and with some foresight declared that radio would find a way to broadcast news, regardless of A. P. restrictions. Roy Howard, head of the United Press, agreed to follow the A.P.'s lead. The resolution was adopted.

In December, 1933, a definite program was drawn up by a committee of publishers, representatives of press associations, radio chains and broadcasting organizations. To a committee of seven was assigned the task of issuing two bulletins a day, selecting items from the A. P., U. P. and International News releases. The Columbia System agreed to dissolve its own partly organized news-gathering service and the National Broadcasting Company promised to keep out of the field. Broadcasts were not to be made until after 9:00 A. M. and 9:30 P. M., some hours after morning and evening editions were on the street. In February, 1934, James W. Barrett, former city editor of The New York American, was made tsar of radio news. World events were to be cleared through his typewriter and transmitted by teletype to America's broadcasting stations. Networks and individuals, even WOR, signed up. It looked like a hands-down victory for the A.P.

But up in Boston, John Shepard, 3rd, owner of station WNAC, had different ideas. A week before the new ruling went into effect Richard Grant, former State House reporter for The Boston Transcript, was detailed to whip together a news-gathering organization to cover New England. Difficulties were encountered. He was barred from the Bay State's pressroom on Beacon Hill. Radio listeners were immediately told of this, a representative filed a bill giving him desk room, and at a public hearing many radio listeners testified that news broadcasts were essential to their happiness. Grant was at once given access to State House news. By citing and complimenting officers who made arrests, he soon gained their coöperation. A large percentage of New England policemen are now self-appointed correspondents for the Yankee Network News Service. District aerial reporters were appointed in forty-five New England centers. Items are telephoned in at once, and if important, go on the air immediately.

The present organization costs the Yankee Network, consisting of eight New England stations, approximately $90,000 a year. But WNAC, from a second or third rating in popularity before March 1, has jumped into first place. During Massachusetts' last primary campaign, the Yankee Network received 85 percent of the politicians' radio business. Former Mayor Curley, who won the Democratic nomination for Governor by an unprecedented majority, used WNAC exclusively.

Grant is now Governor Curley's secretary. But the organization has been built up, and on New England news the Yankee Network continues to scoop the syndicate's Press Bureau. On national and international news its record is also high. It was the first station in the country—including Chicago—to announce the shooting of Dillinger when he was trapped by federal agents last year.

The Yankee Network is the largest subscriber to the Transradio Press Service. This service was formed some weeks after March 1, but it is growing rapidly and now provides fifty or more independent broadcasting stations with news of the world. Among these independent stations and networks, which, like the Yankee organization, are becoming increasingly troublesome to the chain subscribers still using the Press Bureau service, are KNX in Hollywood, KSTP in St. Paul, WLS in Chicago and KWK in St. Louis. Michigan now has a network using Transradio's service.

Transradio is managed by Herbert S. Moore, for many years a U. P. correspondent in London, Washington and New York. The machinery of his new organization differs little from that of the agencies serving newspapers, but its teletyped reports go only to broadcasting stations and other radio clients. Foreign connections have been established with Reuter's, Ltd., and Central News in Great Britain. More than five hundred free-lance correspondents cover national news for Transradio and bureaus have been opened in ten large cities. The Press Bureau's clients now number about two hundred, but WOR's withdrawal will probably result in many other stations' following suit. During the past few months a number of smaller news-gathering agencies for independent radio stations have sprung up and withered. The battle now is between the Press Bureau and the Transradio Press.

Former Senator Dill, who headed the Senate Communications Committee, declared not long ago that "intentionally or unintentionally the press associations are forcing radio listeners to believe that news by radio is a poor substitute for news by newspapers." More recently, Colonel Knox, publisher of The Chicago Daily News, has mounted the fence. A few months ago he declared that the press associations had reached the limit of concessions. Now he is quoted as saying that he has "never been one of those who have spent any time worrying about the conflict between newspapers and radio."

Present broadcasts from the Flemington courthouse, hysterically interrupting musical programs, indicate the confusion caused by needless competition. Meanwhile the public, ever the last to be considered, fumbles at the dials and wishes that the radio news war would end.

C. W. W.

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Bootleg Anthracite

TRUCKERS!
BUY YOUR COAL IN READING
SAVE MILEAGE

LOAD IN PHILADELPHIA
GUARANTEED 100% FRESH-MINED
CHEAPER THAN AT MINES
PEOPLE'S COAL COMPANY

AT SEVERAL points along the road between Pottsville and Philadelphia appear these rather cryptic signs, which become more intelligible after one has passed twenty or thirty loaded coal trucks going south. The average motorist who gets stuck behind a load of coal on a hill is ready to sympathize with the railroads, but little does he realize that the cause of his annoyance is likely to consist of stolen goods en route to market. By no means all the truckers handle bootleg coal: there is a large legitimate business supplied direct from the mines, but in the last three or four years a substantial amount of illegally mined coal has been shipped out by motor.

Early in October it was estimated that 15,000 tons of bootleg stuff were being sold each week in Philadelphia alone—sold from door to door, to anyone who would risk buying a load from a stranger. People in this section have an impression that coal is stolen from old workings in the dead of night and run out of the mine regions by stealth. Maybe it was so in the early depression years, but by this time bootlegging is an openly established industry if not a reputable one. Operations are in evidence everywhere, often just a few feet from the highway. Burlap bags full of coal stand near the roadside in stacks of fifteen or twenty, and trucks loaded with them pass in broad daylight. Children go out to a surface hole and bring home a load in the express wagon, or you may see them starting off with burlap bags over their shoulders. Any husky fellow who is out of a job (and most of them are) can dig around in an abandoned shaft, but usually two or three work together, pick a spot above where the vein is known to run, and start digging a narrow shaft by hand. Sometimes they timber the opening roughly and put up a crude windlass; sometimes they merely build a ladder as they go down.

To a stranger in the coal regions all this is somewhat mystifying. Why do the companies allow it? Where's the sheriff? The answer is that the jails are full; they can't hold a man forever just for stealing coal, and the moment he's out he goes right back to his shaft. One form of attack on the illegal operations is to threaten purchasers with arrest for [illegible] campaigns against short weight—since truckers of bootleg stuff are not always responsible dealers. According to the Philadelphia Bureau of Weights and Measures, this second method has recently reduced the number of bootleg trucks entering the city every week from 4,300 to 2,500. The chief of the Bureau announced on October 10 that eighteen new inspectors were being paid from a fund contributed by "public-spirited citizens . . . to protect the public" from short-weight bootleg coal. Since he would not name the donors, one guess is as good as another, and it is just possible that firms like the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company have had a sudden attack of public spirit.

In the mine country, sentiment is all with the bootleggers. Several months ago, near a small town in the Pottsville neighborhood, the company tried to dynamite the bootleg shafts at night, but when the first blast went off the fire alarm was rung and the whole town turned out. The other shafts are still there. Question almost anybody you meet and you get the same reply:

"It's stealing, of course, but people have to live. And anyway they dig where it don't pay the company to mine."

Having thus rationalized the matter to their satisfaction, your friends in a mining town like Frackville or Shenandoah will take you out to see the sights. There's the panorama of the great coal valley with its black-slag hills and its railroad network; at Mahanoy City there's the new breaker, which does everything by machinery and replaces three old plants. Or if you want to go down a mine, maybe that can be arranged—though very often there's not much doing and most of the collieries are closed. But you can always visit a stripping operation, where mechanical shovels take off the top soil and the rock and dig out the coal from above; stripping seems to go on all the time, probably because it requires so few men. And finally, there's bootlegging.

If you turn off the state highway at a point not far from the new breaker you will find a cluster of five-foot bootleg shafts. The day we stopped there to peer rather gingerly down the square black holes a Model T came up carrying two helmeted miners and a load of logs, and, as it drove past to a shaft beyond, the driver invited us to get the hell out of there, but no one else paid any attention to us. Up a side road we stopped again at a place where there must have been a dozen openings in less than half an acre; they were only ten or twenty feet apart. Work was going forward at most of them and several boys were screening coal. This time a strapping blond youngster of eighteen was more [illegible] to the visitors.

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"We're down forty feet now," he explained in a strong Polish accent. "This hole next, two fellas got down twenty-two feet and then quit—three weeks' work. Here, we get coal soon now."

His partner hollered from the bottom of the shaft:

"Hey, Barney, I got a snake."

Down went the bucket, and up again with a thin little specimen in the bottom. It was only about nine inches long and looked harmless enough, but our snub-nosed bootlegger, after playing with it for a minute and tying it in knots, killed it under his heavy shoe just the same.

A black-haired girl appeared bringing sandwiches in paper bags and a milk bottle full of coffee, which she handed down to men in a nearby shaft.

"Come on over here," suggested Barney. "This here's an old air shaft—it goes down two thousand feet."

"You mean the bootleggers are working that far down?"

"Oh no, they work about a hundred feet down."

"Isn't it dangerous, without the pumps, or new timbers?"

"Sure it is. The slides is the worst—a man got caught yesterday, leg crushed. I had a fractured skull myself. You gotta expect things like that. But it's good coal down there."

He called down the sloping shaft and presently a big chunk of coal was passed up for our inspection. On one side the surface was smooth as black glass and it glistened in the sun.

"You kin keep it," he offered. "They'll get lots more out."

At this he heard from the handsome hussy who brought the lunch:

"You better hurry and get some yourself. Over to our hole, we got out half a ton already this morning and you guys ain't even reached coal yet."

Barney only laughed.

"We're waiting till bootleg brings $5 a ton."

Even at $5 there can't be much of a living in it, for it takes a good many bucket loads to make a ton, and at that the slate and the fine dirt must be cleaned out and the coal itself broken into something resembling the standard sizes. The risk is enormous, and of course there's no compensation to be had when a man loses a foot or gets his chest crushed in a bootleg hole. But it's the only work available for hundreds of men, from grizzled miners to youngsters just over school age. What with mechanization and competing fuels, it is unlikely that even in good years the anthracite industry will ever again absorb all the man-power that is available in this thickly populated region. Meanwhile there is still a depression, and cars loaded with legally mined coal stand in the freight yards ready to be moved out when the orders come. But, except in good cold weather, times will probably continue dull at the collieries, while the little bootleg shafts multiply and the accident rate mounts.

CAROL PAXSON

Washington Notes

The Work-Relief Bill—The House Has Its Slap—Waiting for the Verdict—What's in a Rumor?

IF the speed at which Congress started this week is maintained, it should very shortly pass to the President his four-billion-dollar, without-strings work-relief bill. It passed the House by a majority of 329 to 78, and while the Senate debate will be considerably longer and the analysis much more acute, still there appears at this time no reason to feel that the measure will not go through that body before the end of February. Such, at any rate, is the administration's conviction and desire. Despite Mr. Roosevelt's overwhelming party majority in both branches, it is likely that before he gets his bill he will have to be more concrete and specific both as to the individual who will administer this great sum and the projects upon which it is to be expended. It was easy to get it through the House with the broad general assertion that these details had not yet been determined, but unless I am much mistaken, it will not do to try that with the Senate. If Mr. Roosevelt's plans are at all nebulous, he will be well advised, I think, to make them more definite before the heavy senatorial guns open fire. Even in the House, although amendments were voted down and the huge appropriation went through without strings on it, the leaders had to give ground on one point; they were forced to let in a provision terminating the present administrative agencies of the bill, that is, Mr. Ickes. Of course the President can put Ickes back in charge, but he had to let the House have its slap.

As a matter of fact, several features in regard to this bill seem to be sinking into the minds of the Congressmen. One is that it is far and away the greatest single appropriation ever made in the history of this or any other nation. A second thing is that the blanket authority Mr. Roosevelt asks is so very blanket that, under the language of the bill, there is practically nothing he cannot do with the money—no plan or proposal for which it cannot be used. Such phrases as "for the protection and promotion of the general welfare" and "to correct any economic maladjustments" are sufficiently broad, it will be admitted, to permit Mr. Roosevelt to operate in any direction he chooses with this money. That, it may as well be conceded, is exactly what he wants. Whether he will get it, strange to say, is somewhat uncertain. It may be that this time he has asked too much.

The third thing, which is becoming more generally grasped than before, is that the more important details of the new program have not been thought out. This was made very clear indeed last week in the House when, after much muttering and a few child-size revolts, a sufficient number of insurgents developed to force assurance from Speaker Byrns that Mr. Harold Ickes, present P.W.A. head, will not administer the new program. On the contrary, Mr. Byrns said, the President himself will administer this fund, allocating to various agencies what he considers necessary. Mr. Ickes may have a part in the program but

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Democratic members, who dislike Ickes' type of hard-boiled, non-political operation, were allayed, but the question of who will be in charge was not answered. This is one question that a rather formidable group of Senators say they want answered before the bill is permitted to pass.

The tenseness in administration circles about the Supreme Court's gold-clause decision is still very great. As the Court has recessed until February 4, there is slight possibility of a decision before that time and it may not come even then. To the more thoughtful here, the gold-clause case is by no means the only one of immediate concern. There are at least half a dozen others pending in the Court today that strike right at the heart of the New Deal, and until the opinions have been rendered it is difficult to see how the administration advisers can be anything but confused and uncertain. That they are both, no one who has any contact at all with them doubts for a moment.

Just consider the situation as it exists in the N.R.A. Automatically, the N.I.R.A. expires in five months. Next June, unless Congress extends it, it ceases to have legal existence. Almost every day there appear in the press stories about the new plans Mr. Roosevelt and his advisers have for strengthening, extending and continuing the N.R.A. The details of these plans are never announced—and the reason is plain. How can any intelligent N.R.A. plan be evolved until the questions as to its constitutionality are decided by the Court? At this moment, the Court has before it a vital N.R.A. case. This is the appeal taken by the government from a decision of Federal Judge W. I. Grubb, of Alabama, rendered on October 31. At that time Judge Grubb dismissed an indictment against an Alabama company, which was charged under the N.I.R.A. with paying less than the minimum wages in the Lumber Code. Clearly, until the Supreme Court decides this case, no plan for a future N.R.A. can safely be made—and this is only one of a number of cases affecting the various New Deal policies.

It is not too much to say that the Supreme Court at the moment looms larger in the Washington scene than either Congress or the President. Nor is it too much to say that the administration leaders, from the White House down, are worried. No amount of smiling can conceal that fact. The undeniable truth is that the famous presidential smile has become a trifle strained of late and he has had quite unusual moments of querulousness. Partly, I suppose, this is because of the momentous nature of the pending Supreme Court decisions. Certainly, it is a little difficult to be gay when the fate of so much of the legislation upon which his whole administration rests hangs in the balance. But partly, too, I suspect, it is caused by disappointment with certain of his closer advisers, guides, counselors and friends.

I do not want to add to the burdens of Mr. Donald Richberg, but it is rather commonly reported around Washington that the President's hope that through Mr. Richberg he could at last obtain the coördination of the multitudinous New Deal agencies and lessen the confusion that is one of the real threats to his administration, has not been realized. Mr. Richberg, so they say, has done far too much traveling [illegible] far too many speeches to be an effective coördi- heads of the New Deal agencies sufficiently to induce them to bring their problems to him instead of taking them directly to the President. However, I do not feel that he should be blamed for that. No one, in my judgment, could achieve that desirable but impossible feat. There is also the fact that Mr. Richberg's apparently needless alarm over General Johnson's Saturday Evening Post articles made him rather ridiculous, consequently diminishing his prestige and his usefulness.

Taken all in all, Mr. Richberg's position at the moment is not the happiest and there are rumors of his return to Chicago and the practice of law. Talk to this effect has already begun to appear in print. Of course these rumors may be utterly baseless and the suggestion that Mr. Roosevelt is slightly disappointed in Mr. Richberg may do both of them an injustice. Nevertheless, it has been my observation, based on a good many years of Washington experience, that if rumors of the resignation of public officials, however unfounded they may be at the time, continue to appear in print at frequent intervals, they are almost invariably justified in the end. There have been exceptions, but not many. It will be interesting to see how much newspaper space is given to these rumors. It is interesting, too, to point out that the rumors of Johnson's retirement were completely without foundation when they were first printed. At that time the idea had occurred to neither Mr. Roosevelt nor the doughty General. Sometimes rumors have no more foundation than a keen observer's perception that an existing situation will eventually be untenable. Quite frequently this is perceived by outsiders long before it is suspected by the insiders.

Washington. T. R. B.

Prelude

And it is you: toward the light you move
As silently, as gravely, as a ship
counters the evening tide: the silver forefoot
divides the winedark water: lights may be
where land may be: the darkened shore may hide
who knows what orchards; and behind those boughs—

And it is you: toward the face you move
as smoothly and as lightly as a gull
counters the evening air: the silver wingtip
divides the winedark dusk: belief may be
where rest may be: what thought you had, when restless,
who knows what wisdom it will lean to now—

And it is you: against the night you walk
with one hand lifted up and like a lamp,
to guide and fend off evil: eyeless, eyeless
your courage, like a cloud, assumes the wall;
presumes and mounts it; is unbroken still;
proceeds to find what further waits, what other—

And it is you: who passed, but stay here still;
you, like a chair which someone else has made;
you, like a rug which someone else has woven;
you, like a wall, which someone else has mortared;
a book, some hand left open; a face, seen once,
not liked, or disliked, but remembered: you.

Conrad Aiken.

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Other People's Money

Recovery on the Dole—"Who Are We?"—Coaxing the Rich—Banks in Illinois—Going, Going, Gone

THOSE who talk about the "recovery" of 1934 persist in ignoring that it is a recovery on the dole. The man who collects ten dollars a week from the relief administration knows he is on the dole. But the man who gets that ten dollars from the dolee for the food he buys doesn't reflect that he, too, is flourishing partly, at least, on a dole. An excellent example of this is the steel industry. Newspapers have been proclaiming that steel production rose ten percent last year. That is true. But what did it rise on? Let us see.

In 1934, steel-rail production was 1,007,746 tons. In 1933 it was only 408,206 tons. This is an increase of 599,540 tons (147 percent). But of this 599,540 increase, 424,746 tons resulted from purchases made by the railroads with money loaned by the government.

There was an increase of 150,000 tons in angle bars, etc. Of this, 71 percent was bought with federal funds. There was a 25-percent increase in steel for agricultural implements. Moreover, there was a marked increase in automobile sales in the farm areas. And it must be remembered that over half a billion dollars was distributed to farmers by the government from processing taxes. Hundreds of industries have profited from farm purchases coming out of these taxes.

The steel industry, the automobile industry, every industry that has been boasting about its better business of 1934 got that better business out of federal funds paid out to its customers. These industries are on the dole. Their employees are on the dole. What is more to the point, the stockholders who have been getting the rising dividends and the bondholders who have been getting their continuing interest are, therefore, also on the dole.

It is not so long ago that we were hearing about the Roosevelt revolution. Here is what it has come to. The following was uttered, not by some irresponsible hanger-on, but by one of the heads of the N.R.A.—to wit: Mr. S. Clay Williams:

> The question is not whether we will have some new system but only whether under the old system *we* will accept some new measures of responsibility and apply some safeguards that will work both in *our* interest and in the interest of the general public.

Who are *we?* And what is *our* interest in which the head of the N.R.A. includes himself as opposed to the "general public"? He does not leave us in any doubt at all. He says:

> It is the rich man who can do for us many, many things we cannot do for ourselves. And he should have our encouragement. . . . And lest someone should think that by being rich or by attaining riches through his energy and his thrift and his pioneering he should be rated as unduly favored above others or that there is danger to the country or to its people from such accumulations, let me remind you of the present state of the tax laws.
>
> If our wealthy citizen makes a very large income, half of it goes immediately to the government as income taxes, and if in spite of that levy he accumulates a very large estate, half of that at his death goes to the government in the way of inheritance taxes. In other words, the kind of earner and accumulator that I am describing is, in the end, working on the basis of 25 cents on the dollar—25 cents for himself and 75 cents for the government.

No, dear children, this is not Andy Mellon talking, but the head of N.R.A. This is the voice of the so very New Deal. Let us see how the rich man has fared under it. Here are the taxes the New Deal has imposed since it got going:

Liquor taxes	$430,000,000
Processing taxes	570,000,000
Income taxes	150,000,000
Silver-profits tax	1,000,000
Firearms tax	2,600,000
Unemployment-insurance tax	600,000,000
Old-age pensions tax	50,000,000

I include the last two as they are about to be adopted. The total is $1,803,600,000. Of this you will see only $150,000,000 is in direct income taxes, which cannot be passed on to the consumer. Thus, of the vast costs of the government supported by taxes, these high-income groups have been shouldered with a trifle over eight percent. Yes, those splendid rich men, to whom, for our salvation, we must hold for dear life, have not lacked encouragement.

I never visit Chicago and Illinois without fresh cause for wonder and admiration. This week I was edified by the newspaper accounts of the fine showing of Illinois banks. The praise did, however, omit a few details. For instance, it omitted the fact that this state ranks first in the number of bankless towns. There are thirty-six towns in Illinois that have no banks, and many have had none since 1930. Many of these communities are substantial settlements—towns of 10,000 and more—one of them, Berwyn, having 47,000 people. In 1920 it had seven banks. Now, alas, it has none. Here is the history of its banking resources. In 1920: $1,194,000; 1930: $5,933,000 (progress); last recordable figure: $173,000; today: nothing.

There are plenty of others like this. The thirty-six towns have an equally impressive record—$41,000,000 in 1920; $56,000,000 in 1930; $24,000,000 in 1933; today, nothing. At least Jesse Jones cannot hop on these banks for not lending.

Which brings us to another banking phenomenon—a large bank in Baltimore. Its published statement last week revealed this interesting fact: Deposits, $150,000,000; loans of all sorts, $10,000,000. Thus a little over six percent of its deposits are out on commercial loans. United States government deposits in that bank were $22,00,000. Thus the bank has out on loans less than half of the government deposits. Is this a bank?

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Miró and Dali

JOAN MIRO is a painter who has never hesitated, through fear of compromising his chances of popular success, to give free rein to the vagaries of his personal stylistic evolution. Popular success in painting depends on the public's familiarity with the painter's idiom. The simplest means to it is the adoption of an easily recognizable formula. Academicism provides them ready-made. But a fresh, or freshened formula—even one so obvious as Dali's exaggerated dependence on perspective effects, or his minute precision in treatment—requires hammering home in the old, sound advertising-ritual sense of repetition *ad nauseam*. And because Miró has a fertility of invention that he has not confined to bait favor, the public, in great part unacquainted with any representative cross-section of his work, has frequently been mystified by the seeming non-sequiturs in his development from season to season.

A similar mystification has often been expressed in regard to the constantly varying vehicle of his countryman Picasso. But when an early work by Miró such as his "Farm" is seen among some of his latest productions (as at present in the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York City), his own development, as well as his heritage, becomes clear. Miró is primarily a folk-painter: his ideography is a page taken directly (and uncensored) out of the peasant imaginings of his native countryside. His palette is that of his earliest recollections: the magentas, olives and deep blues of the primitive Catalonian church murals, and the gay, raw reds, the whites and yellows of the peasant artisan. His masters are those two Northerners who have always held such a curious appeal for the Spanish temperament, Breughel and Bosch.

Still the relationship between Miró's expression and the work of these two masters is by no means one of pastiche. It is one rather of spirit than of physical resemblance: a quaint whimsicality of form-concept, a dream character—a sort of mysticism-of-the-familiar. Nevertheless, in his "Farm" there is already a hint of the half-smiling quasi-literalism that is to grow closer to Breughel in the hilarity of his 1929 "Interieurs Hollandais"; and in his 1934 pastel grotesques there is a weirdness of humor that curiously suggests Bosch. Too, in the intervening years his canvases were populated with forms from a personal demonology which rival for inventiveness the most extreme phantasies of the master of "Tungdal's Vision," yet always retain an unmistakably Miróesque character.

And in the final accounting it is as a genuine plastic Superrealist that Miró takes his place. This, despite his dislike of having his name associated with that group. It is true that there is very little possibility of a mature plastic expression's achieving the Superrealist purity of André Breton's original definition: an expression "dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exerted by reason, and without regard to any esthetic or moral preoccupations." But Miró, in his character of naïve realist, probably comes closer to it than any of his contemporaries. His effects are achieved primarily through the rhythmic evocations of line and color-organizations that have grown out of a thorough assimilation of physical forms, not of [illegible] the negative: you must somehow catch the avowed Superrealist such as his fellow Catalan, Dali—aside from Dali's technical preoccupations and his admiration of Meissonier as the maniac of the precise—are fundamentally illustrational, or "symbolic," as he may prefer. Dali defines painting as "photography, by hand and in colors, of concrete irrationality and the world of the imagination in general." Dali's basic forms likewise come from the world about him. But because he is not interested in forms for themselves he never genuinely absorbs or assimilates them. They are merely reshuffled in his fancy. The result is that while the Superrealist paintings of Dali and of his less interesting colleagues are presentations, arresting merely for illustrational qualities, of old forms in hackneyed formal organizations, Miró's work constantly provides plastic inventions that have a genuine Superrealist quality of spontaneity and freedom.

JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY.

Not in Mournful Numbers

AMONG the several good pictures that have come recently, "Chapayev," a Soviet production, has the most interesting combination of weakness and strength. It is about a national hero, the carpenter who during the Bolshevik revolution whipped his ragged following into a working unit of the Red army—Chapayev, all swagger and iron competence and heart and little vanities, fighting first and talking afterwards, a problem for any central committee. He'd learned to read; he had ambitions. He wanted to be like Alexander the Great as soon as he'd heard of him. A fine figure. Certainly the most immediate personal greatness we can know is that found in a man who can command many men with purpose, vigor and success, live with them and work with them so that they know him—all his bad points and hard points and private foolishness—and then can take his leave of them when the work is over, they knowing the worst they can know, and still standing there like fools with their eyes wet, the bottom out of the world. "Chapayev" suggests these qualities clearly, and thus to me it says something fine. Tied up as it is with the Revolution, it has an implied, deeper meaning as well—the prisoners of starvation, the birth of a world.

As a picture, the failings of "Chapayev" are several. The parallel-action idea (the other, White-Guard side) not only confuses but weakens the structure. Have a care, I should say, how you get familiar with the enemy when the main dramatic point is the suspense of waiting for him, not knowing where he will come from, or how, or in what numbers, a sort of nameless force. There are some fine scenes here, with the firing line quiet, waiting, and then suddenly those crazy Cossacks swarming down off the hill; and also the night attack, the blurred speed of cavalry filing into town. In general, though, the line of plot is shaky and the more active parts are weakly managed. Partly because little attention has been paid to sound, which starts and stops (are they firing or not, and is a machine gun a machine gun or is it a set of traps?). Partly because figures aren't milled around with enough skill, don't bunch right, don't fall right. Faster cutting would have helped; also the use of suggestive details, more imagination in the camera angles. You can't just photograph a sham battle

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most characteristic and arresting qualities of it, in motion.

But though primarily an action picture, "Chapayev" has few climactic sections, and so gives much attention to qualities of character. Eventually it drags and seems padded even here (especially in the lapses into singing, where one momentarily expects the Mills Brothers), but that doesn't matter: these people are so good to look at, even when nothing happens. As actors, I cannot describe Chapayev (Boris Borochkin) or his Commissar, or that gamin machine gunner or his girl, without referring to the pervading sense of delight in a personality: what swell people, you keep saying, how endearing and true and everything. As I tried to suggest at the start, they, and the grand excitement of that time are what count here. Technically the picture gets by merely, but as a show it has you laughing and admiring and hoping and crying, and what do you go to a show for anyway, to make a critical analysis?

But when good movies come in bunches it is unfortunate, because some have to be slipped over too quickly. For personal satisfaction in the theatre, I hardly think I'd put "The Gilded Lily" second to "Chapayev." The Paramount film also has this base of human quality, though it is the human quality of romantic comedy—a different, but not by nature inferior, matter. Romantic comedy is what you make it, and what Wesley Ruggles and Claude Binyon (director and writer) have made of "The Gilded Lily" is silk, and nothing less. The method here derives from Capra and others (the popcorn and wise-guy-eh? sequences, for example), but there is an important difference in the writing. In the first place, the story of a girl who made headlines jilting an English lord, and coming to him afterwards in doubt, and returning finally to her mug of a newspaper man—this is easy, but has more on the ball than anything Mr. Riskin has written for Mr. Capra. Then, the man who wrote the dialogue here has put in some of the most honest and authentic American I've heard from the screen. Dialogue is much more than words, it is partly an expression of character, it is the difference between the pseudo-literary burlesque of our early American plays, and the language of Shakespeare—the words smooth with honest use, the sharp bright idiom of popular genius. As to acting, Miss Colbert is a true artist in comedy, and Fred MacMurray is a find, that strange sort of person whose artifice is high enough to give the illusion of someone who is folks, someone you always knew (someone you never knew, but would like to). "The Gilded Lily" is one of the best of its kind, full of nice sentiment and surface brilliance; and since I've spent so much time on its kind before, we'll have to let it go at that. I also hate to slight "Romance in Manhattan" and "The Night Is Young," with Evelyn Laye. One has Francis Lederer, Stephen Roberts' shrewd direction, and a generally likable and humorous support to cover up its shallow content; the other is a sort of operetta, Vienna in Hollywood, with Una Merkel, Edward Everett Horton and Charles Butterworth turning in the expected comedy, and an air of charm over the whole (too shiny to believe, but you didn't go to believe it). As for such pieces as "The Wandering Jew," with Conrad Veidt, (an English film having about as much continuity and excitement as your aunt's family album) and Will Rogers in "The County Chairman," these you can slight and love it.

CORRESPONDENCE

On the Road to Collectivism

SIR: There are two points in your editorial on liberalism [The New Republic, January 9] on which, without disagreeing with your statement, I should like to push the conclusions, perhaps, a little further.

When The New Republic was founded, liberalism, as conceived by Herbert Croly, assumed that the foundations of our present society would remain intact: the major problems for him were those that concerned the superstructure. Liberalism did not seek to alter the goals and motives and benefits that had been built up by capitalism. Essentially, this liberalism was a doctrine of mediation: it assumed that its main function was to reconcile the antagonistic attitudes of the radicals and the reactionaries, keeping the latter from lagging, keeping the former from advancing too fast or too far. Refusing to regard capitalism as a system, it refused also to undertake the burden of creating a different system.

Liberalism in this sense has never been part of my own political creed; and I am naturally happy to see that The New Republic has publicly abandoned it. But in looking forward to a collectivist or communist society there is a danger, it seems to me, in minimizing the changes that must take place: changes in bases, purposes, ends. Capitalism assumed that private interests were uppermost, private property sacred and private gain the chief end of all our collective endeavor. Public concerns were a residue in a world contrived primarily in the interests of the rich and the powerful.

Communism reverses this relation of the private and the public. Along with this, it presents a vision of life in which the abstractions of money and power will have only a minor instrumental significance, and in which biological and human interests will be paramount. In part, this vision is still imperfectly realized even among the communists: for official communism is a curious compound of early nineteenth-century ideology, unmodified by the art and science of the subsequent years, with twentieth-century capitalist technique. Neither the ideology nor the technique forms a sufficient foundation for modern communism. American communists who have turned to the official doctrines of communism as a means of personal salvation have blinded themselves to this fact; but if one is more interested in the success of communism than in the consolations of religious conversion, the fact is pretty plain.

Now, once The New Republic accepts a collectivist program, it assumes the duty, it seems to me, of taking a more positive lead in this basic reorientation. It must not merely supply rational criticism of means and alternatives: it must take a share in the creative revaluation of the basic postulates of modern society, and in projecting appropriate molds for a new order. If choosing is creating, as Nietzsche well says, creation is likewise the most positive mode of choice. Here The New Republic would fulfill a function that neither the opportunist journals that advocate random panaceas nor the orthodox Marxian periodicals like The New Masses are prepared to fulfill.

In leaving behind the stale liberalism of capitalist compromise there is, however, a danger of leaving behind the revolutionary tradition of liberalism. Liberalism, as developed by both the American and the French revolutions, was in essence the opposite of absolutism. It proposed that political functions rest, not upon arbitrary power, but upon the informed consent of the citizens. Against the feudal claims of blood, liberalism upheld the claims of capacity. Liberalism, as opposed to absolutism, emphasized the way in which rational thought modifies the irrational loyalties and naïve prejudices of class and country. Hence its insistence upon freedom of thought, which means freedom of criticism. Hence, too, its insistence upon the rights of minorities—that is, the right to express and maintain differences. For liberalism, both unity and difference are equally aspects of a healthy society.

Now liberalism in this second sense has added a valuable element to our human heritage; an element that a communist society cannot throw away wantonly any more than it can throw away the deep Christian respect for human life as a value in itself. But observe: fascism and [illegible]

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totalitarian state, the other in that of a totalitarian proletariat. The official Marxists have indeed retained a little more of the eighteenth-century respect for rational thought than have the fascists; but it is a respect they keep for their own thoughts and not for their opponents'. Moreover, they share with the Nazis the superstitious admiration not alone for authority but for blood—a point not concealed by the fact that the proper stigma for Marxism is a proletarian ancestry rather than a blond head.

Since modern communism rests upon a rational organization of the economic apparatus of living, such habits of thought are highly inimical to its further development. Authority, blood, officialized thought, officially edited history, superstitious obedience to the Higher Political Powers, credulous acceptance of uncriticized dogma in the interests of solidarity—these debasements, however occasioned or justified, will eventually offset the gains made by the socialization of the means of production and distribution, and will finally defeat the egalitarian ideals that are implicit in our modern techniques. We in America have had the social experience of Free Land and an Open Frontier and a Fresh Start. We know the essential human decency of an ungraded community. We have had a foretaste in primitive form of the fine human reality of a communist society, and we have therefore a special task in creating a new order: the task of dissociating communism from absolutism, and equipping it with more rational modes of discipline and social organization. If we abandon our own revolutionary traditions of liberalism, we will not make matters easier for the orthodox Marxians: we shall simply put ourselves at the mercy of the fascists, who, promising to make every man a king, threaten to make each of us a slave to their childish despotism. In this fight, Jefferson is a closer ally than Lenin.

Long Island City, N. Y. LEWIS MUMFORD.

Is There a Student Movement?

SIR: Your editorial of January 10, "Is There a Student Movement in America?" answers the question with a decided negative. Although you grant that worthwhile activities have been carried on against various manifestations of militarism and fascism . . . the implications seem plain enough: the present trend in the student movement toward united action on immediate student problems is fruitless. A real student movement, so your editorial indicates, will have to be harnessed to a political party.

Now this, I should like to state quite categorically, is the exact position of a definite grouping in the student movement. Without any serious or detailed discussion in the pages of The New Republic, you have indentified yourself with a particular point of view on the whole problem of the direction and purpose of the student movement. . . . Without any proof or explanation, you have labeled the slogans of recent student activities as "elderly" and "passionless." Your alternative, "a revolutionary political party," can mean any one of a hundred different things. . . .

Your editorial effects a basic separation between the daily activities and the ultimate aims of a militant student organization. The National Student League has always maintained that students can be most revolutionary by hitting hardest at the reflections of capitalism and reaction on the campus. Students engaged in a campaign for the abolition of the R.O.T.C. are also fighting against the War Department and, ultimately, against the very causes of war. Every student issue, retrenchment, academic freedom, discrimination against Negro students, has its roots in deeper social conflicts and contradictions. Students who participate in campus demonstrations and strikes grasp at these broader implications and, very frequently, become conscious revolutionists. . . .

Your editorial question may be answered in the affirmative precisely because the student movement has approached the problems of social change and of class alignment on the basis of the daily lives and experiences of the majority of American students. The thousands of students who came out of their classes to strike against war last April 13 did so primarily because the united front between the N.S.L. and the Student L.I.D. was able to make them see the problem of war as immediate and intimate. The most important and the most effective factor in the student movement [illegible] between these two organizations.

same direction. To this end, the National Student League has proposed the amalgamation of the Student L.I.D. and the N.S.L. to form one united organization of militant students, which will surely within a short period attract tens of thousands of unaffiliated students. Such an organization, although based primarily on the immediate problems of the students, would have to take a stand on certain fundamental social questions. In opposing war and fascism, it will have to go to their roots and oppose capitalism. It will have to align itself with the working class as an ally on immediate student issues such as retrenchment and academic freedom, and because only an organized working class can achieve the ultimate perspectives of peace and security. Such an organization will of course unite students of different political views on the basis of some such minimum program. One militant student organization will give the student movement the unity, solidarity and effectiveness it needs so much.

The N.S.L. proposal for student unity was discussed at some length at the recent student conferences in the Midwest. Although it was defeated at the Student L.I.D. convention, it was the center of much heated discussion and has support in many L.I.D. chapters. There is little doubt that the problem of student unity is of paramount importance in the student movement. It is indeed regrettable that your editorial does not so much as mention the entire matter, but offers instead "a revolutionary political party" of uncertain character in an uncertain future.

New York City. ADAM LAPIN.

SIR: I think that you would perhaps be interested in the following quotations from an editorial appearing in The Parthenon, the student newspaper of Marshall College, Huntington, West Virginia. The editorial was written in answer to the question, "Is There a Student Movement in America?" which you asked in The New Republic of January 16.

> If by a student movement is meant a body of young men and women sworn to oppose the R.O.T.C., to combat militarism, to eliminate discrimination against the Negro, to oppose jingoism, to fight social injustice, to effect the socialization of industry, or the overthrow of the capitalist system, then there is, if we see correctly, nothing comparable to a student movement in America. . . .
>
> If by a student movement The New Republic means a hundred thousand young men and women hot in pursuit of the unimportant (and quite capable of rationalizing their pastime), eager, impatient, wonderfully full of zest for the strangest things, a-twitter over the latest chattering movie, drunk with the beat of drums, and blue clarinets and mellow gold saxophones, healthy, likable, but oh so disappointing, so unpromising, then there are, according to all indications, some traces of a student movement in America. That is, if you define student broadly. Whether or not this is the movement for which The New Republic is looking is another question entirely.

Huntington, W. Va. E. S. M.

Extracts from Letters

THE National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control writes that permission to disseminate birth-control information through licensed medical circles is provided for, in a bill introduced in the Senate by Senator Daniel O. Hastings of Delaware. Mrs. Margaret Sanger and her co-workers in the National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control are sponsors of the legislation. The bill would amend certain sections of the criminal code to modify provisions placed in it during the Anthony Comstock crusade sixty-two years ago. Before that time, there was no prohibition against the circulation of contraceptive information.

The Cinema Guild of Detroit writes us: "Like the audience groups in France and England and the few in America, the Cinema Guild of Detroit, newly organized, is setting out to create a membership movie-group that will show the many fine European and independent productions usually not shown because they do not check with the political, social and cultural status quo. We also expect to aid in the production of experimental and independent movies. We invite readers of The New Republic in Detroit who [illegible] 127 West Adams Street."

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A Serious Coward Play

Point Valaine, by Noel Coward. Ethel Barrymore Theatre, January 16, 1935.

THE RETURN of Mr. Lunt and Miss Fontanne is an important theatre event, and the morning after their opening I looked up diverse reviews. There was, besides much gloom, frequent disappointment on the part of many critics as to the play itself. One might in some of these criticisms gather that up to this time Mr. Coward has given us every hope of luster and supremacy. For my part I find the outcry rather surprising. Granted that "Point Valaine" is a shallow and perhaps semi-pretentious piece, granted that its deeper moments are hopelessly underwritten, and not, in fact, even imagined by the dramatist, this new play seems to me as good as most of Mr. Coward's other serious plays. It is rougher in texture and stronger in odor than "Design for Living," but it is less vulgar. It is not so facile and drawing-room as "The Vortex," but is darker and more tragic material at least. If it suggests Conrad or Maugham—or, better, certain glib melodrama versions of tropical seas and exotic divertissements of passion—it no more suggests them than "The Vortex" suggested various flimsy, distant seed of Ibsen.

For another item I may say that the seemingly universal regret over Mr. Coward's not being more "brilliant" in "Point Valaine" is misplaced. It is to his credit that he is not full of cynical *mots* in scenes where life is, to put it mildly, supposed to be stirred to its depths. I prefer his being dull, thin and conscientious in such scenes to his being bright and shining. And "Point Valaine" is not always dull.

It should be said at this moment that Mr. Coward will for some time at least present a glittering lure for actors. On two grounds. The first of these is that he provides the outline of suggestion, a pattern of something to be acted instead of shaped, forced and sworn at by the actor, a genuine theatrical intuition and promising sketch. The second is that he has had remarkable success and publicity, a thing charming to actors and in itself dramatic and illusive. Any actor of instinct will sense, also, that Mr. Coward has an amazing *stage* talent and facility.

Another serious play is "Cavalcade." I saw only the film version (the playwright is said to have expressed satisfaction with it). It seemed largely specious. Such moments in "Cavalcade" as that where the doomed young people stand aside and you see on the life-belt the words "Titanic," I thought the cheapest theatre rubbish. The celebrated bit of Queen Victoria's funeral passing, shown only by a group on the balcony above the street, clicked solely through a certain nonsense we cherish as to understatement and suggestion. For those who thought these scenes great art, "Point Valaine" must indeed seem a letdown. For my part, I think it to Mr. Noel Coward's credit that he tried to keep the tropical-island passions and tragedies of "Point Valaine" free of tosh; it is not his fault if he could explore these scenes only superficially; and it is to his credit that he has provided what can incite and partially contain so much fine acting.

"Point Valaine" separates itself into two parts. One concerns atmosphere, something for which a playwright may become famous and once famous remain so. A slight travel in tourist regions will give the key; and proficient stage directing, plus some keen type casting, will carry it out. The hotel-guest scenes in "Point Valaine" are good if fairly obvious, in fact like numbers. They ladle out contrasts and atmosphere. The underlying mood that would really make these hotel and atmosphere passages a part of a tragic whole is not present. There is no atmosphere in the final sense; there is only locale.

The other part of "Point Valaine" concerns the story of the mistress of an inn in a semitropical island. She is a widow, for seven years the paramour of her Russian headwaiter. A young aviator, famous in the papers because of his having been lost in the jungle, turns up. He falls in love with the mistress of the inn, she with him. It is the first time, we are told, she has ever really been in love. On a night when the waiter is detained on the mainland, this new love reaches its climax. The waiter unexpectedly returns. Within hearing of her lover in the next room, he insults and upbraids the woman. She, by a reaction of despair, wishes him dead, et cetera. The young lover comes out of her room and goes silently across the stage—oh, very silently! She withdraws and locks the door, the waiter cuts his wrist and throws himself into the sea, which after dark is fitted out with sharks. Next morning's epilogue shows the young man going away, the guests shocked, the woman saying that she must get a new headwaiter.

In this last act the lines written for Miss Fontanne are empty all too often and she struggles with them as best she may. I think the thing for her to do in this act is to emphasize more strongly what the woman is to be, how much a mere brute, how much a suffering and wronged piece of humanity. Otherwise Miss Fontanne's performance is remarkable, one of the best in her career. In the scene with the young aviator, she takes simple words, repetitions, dialogue capable of mere platitude, and reads them with miraculous implications. The pausing, the stresses, the variations, so subtly contrived, in tone and rhythm, are not to be described. Mr. Osgood Perkins, in the role of a novelist who is observing people and extracting their mystery for his popular purposes, plays well a grateful, plump role, very well. To say he competes with Miss Fontanne or Mr. Lunt is to be beside the point. He is expert and proficient where they are in another region, are generically removed. In pitch they have the abstraction of important art. In their whole projection they carry us along with them into acting *per se*, a thing as different from mere playing as a born singing voice is from a voice that is as skilled and so on as you like, but not the same thing and not in the same realm. Another way of making this point would be to say that an actor like Mr. Perkins might be, at some moment, better than Miss Fontanne or Mr. Lunt; he would still, at that very moment, not be as good.

Mr. Lunt created something magnificent and tragic, really brutal and really developing into the pathetic. A role thought out in every detail, projected. It was not impossible to Mr. Coward's writing, but rather an extension, vastly more notable, something to be remembered long after we have forgotten what loose theatre affair it was in.

Miss Calthrop's settings, and the lighting, for "Point Valaine" were entirely admirable.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The March on Berlin[1]

KONRAD HEIDEN attended the University of Munich during those post-war years when the National Socialist Party was being organized. Besides listening to lectures on law and politics, he also performed practical field work by fighting the Nazi groups among his fellow students and by attending scores of Nazi meetings. He talked to Hitler himself, but was not won over. Later Herr Heiden continued to follow the Nazi movement as political correspondent for the Frankfurter Zeitung, the last and greatest of the German independent liberal newspapers. He shows in his books the virtues and defects of liberal journalism at its best. He is wise and temperate; he excels in gathering facts without being able to fit them into a coherent pattern. He is a man of many ideas, but not of one directing idea. He has brilliant perceptions but not much imagination. He specializes. He is a keen judge of men and events, but he neglects the underlying forces that guide them and the background against which they are silhouetted.

He has written two books about National Socialism: their German titles are "Geschichte des Nazionalsozialismus" and "Geburt des dritten Reiches." If they are considered together (instead of being pieced and pressed together awkwardly, as in the present English version) they form the clearest and most detailed account yet written of Hitler's rise to supreme leadership. The second book, hastily written in exile, is inferior to the first, yet even so it contains a masterly story of the backstairs intrigues that began with the November, 1932, elections and continued till the end of the following January, when Hitler was made chancellor. Herr Heiden excels in describing situations like this, when personal jealousies are almost as important as class interests and when history seems to depend on a series of accidents. But his first book, published in 1932, is on the whole more interesting and better put together. It tells how the National Socialist German Workers' Party was founded by a forgotten man, a poor locksmith named Anton Drexler, and how Hitler joined it in July, 1919, as No. 7 of the "inner political cell" of an organization that had not a hundred members. It tells how the recruit took charge of propaganda for the new party, and how his department soon overshadowed all the other party activities. It tells how he began to beg for money from employers' associations as early as 1922, on the ground of his anti-labor policy. He did not "betray" the workers after his rise to power; he was against them from the beginning. The "socialist" side of National Socialism was introduced in the years 1926-28 by a Berlin group that surrounded Otto and Gregor Strasser. Herr Heiden tells how they were forced to leave the party.

Both his books, but particularly the first, are full of brilliant characterizations. Thus, he says that Hitler is not an instinct-man or a will-man but a brain-man—"and, it must be admitted, a notable one. The planning of his campaign for power is an intellectual achievement of a high order." Arthur Rosenberg, the party theorist, is "German by descent but Russian in mentality." He carried with him a "gloomy, bloodthirsty Russian anti-Semitism that infected the quieter German type." The foreign policy he imposed on the Hitler movement "was not German but White Russian . . . its spiritual sources were actually in the Russia of the Tsars, in the world of the Black Hundreds." These remarks cast a good deal of light into dark places. But like most of the brilliant things that Herr Heiden says, they are neither related to a general plan nor carried logically to the conclusions they imply.

There is at least one serious omission from his story of the Nazi movement, and that is the role unwillingly played in it by the Communist Party of Germany. The fact is that National Socialism was founded in Munich during the Communist revolution, was dedicated throughout its life as an opposition party to the task of "fighting the Red peril," and finally came to power after burning the Reichstag building in order to demonstrate the existence of a Communist plot. Communism and National Socialism are utterly opposed in theory and purpose—but for this very reason, and by a law of polarity that often prevails in politics, they assumed the same outward appearance and followed the same tactics. It would be nearer the truth to say that the Communists invented the tactics and the Nazis copied them, but there are two exceptions to this rule—the Nazis were the first to form a private army and the first to attack their enemies in the streets. By 1932, in any case, the two parties resembled each other like the opposite poles of a magnet. The Nazis had created a counterpart to almost every Communist organization; they had even penetrated into the factories by organizing shop cells on the Communist model. A Communist workman who wandered by mistake into a Nazi meeting would hear the same attacks on capitalism, see the same red banners (marked with a swastika instead of the hammer and sickle), be importuned by the same collection speech. When the band struck up, he would hear the songs of the Russian revolution, to which the Nazis had written words of their own. Everything was planned to make him feel at home, even the Nazi greeting of *Genosse,* Comrade.

A few months after the Communist Party lost its battle, this whole demagogic machinery was quietly dismantled. There were no more shop cells, no more appeals to revolution; it was worth one's life to talk against capitalism. The Nazi strategists, with the half-Russian Arthur Rosenberg at their head, now entered on maneuvers that revealed a new process of polarization. Instead of attacking and imitating Communism within Germany, they began to attack and imitate the Soviet Union, to develop a capitalist dictatorship that would rival the proletarian dictatorship, to subsidize a Brown International that would work in every country against the Red International, to preach race unity as a means of destroying class unity. This is another development that Herr Heiden neglects, even though he mentions Rosenberg's crazy scheme for conquering and colonizing the Ukraine.

The fact remains that he has written two very important books about National Socialism. In the present English version, they lose at least half their value. The translator has combined and condensed them into a single volume, retaining the sections he regards as most important. The trouble is that he almost invariably chooses the wrong passages to omit, and renders the others in a style that sometimes soars into subtle and ethereal heights of pure

[1] [illegible] New

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Years of the Lean Kine

World Diary: 1929-1934, by Quincy Howe. New York: Robert McBride and Company. 403 pages, illustrated. $3.50.

MR. QUINCY HOWE, who specializes in the study of international affairs, has made the experiment of setting down in almost day-to-day chronicle the chief political events upon this planet during the past five years—from the Wall Street panic of October, 1929, to the Saar plebiscite. He has written objectively, with little effort at theory or generalization, save for some pointing-with-irony and some emphasis upon meaningful coincidence. The coincidences are the richest part of his book: Russia finishes building the Turksib railway on one day; England closes the frontier of India on the next. England abandons the gold standard, and a few days later U. S. Steel, General Motors and also Mussolini announce wage cuts of ten percent. The British Empire moves toward tariff protection, and Japan abandons gold and invades north China. In Germany and America governments of "national concentration" are inaugurated within a few days of each other, February 27 and March 4, 1933. All this and much more is set down, as if the bare summation of these events is to draw its own lesson for the reader.

The author has a keen eye for the main currents and tides in the half-decade reviewed; moreover, his narrative is studded with very pertinent and revealing quotations gathered from the press of all the world or from the statements of political and financial leaders. He has probably been wholly right in fixing upon the growth of militant nationalism in Germany and Japan as the outstanding political events; and upon the increased production of goods in countries of recent development—simultaneous with the appearance of an indigestible technology in the older industrial nations—as the outstanding economic events. "World Diary" nearly succeeds in becoming the invaluable document we look for, the book with a key to the strange years 1929-34.

I say "nearly," because to write of contemporary events is to expose oneself to heavy risks and insurmountable difficulties, the most obvious of which is the want of perspective. Perhaps the best line would have been to make a virtue of necessity and write of these too near events from a deliberately contemporary and subjective view; to write without restraint a veritable diary of what one young horizon-scanner understood, felt or hoped in 1929-34; and to bring all that he saw or heard into clear relation with some fixed social objective or set of values. Short of this there results neither revealing diary nor organized history based on sure evidence. A great deal of sound suggestion, or shrewd localized interpretation, is lost in the mazes of intrigue, panic and insurrection that color the time, in all the masses of facts given almost in notation.

A special difficulty in writing about the last five years flows from the fact that they have as yet taken no decisive, climactic form, such as the years from 1919 to 1929 already reveal. The decade ending in 1929 saw the attempt at "restoration" of pre-war capitalism upon the framework of Versailles. Of the second post-war decade, we know only half or less: it involves certainly the collapse of the Versailles system and resumption of the trend to imperialist world war. This is the sense of R. Palme Dutt's brilliant and tendentious work, "Fascism and Social Revolution," which also takes the era of world depression as its text. Mr. Dutt, the British Communist, by dint of being dogmatic and deductive, paints a remarkably clear picture of the complex of economic forces at work and argues everything toward a logical débâcle of imperialist war. Mr. Howe, who largely agrees with Mr. Dutt, suggests the same culmination; his method, however, leaves the whole background of compelling economic-imperialist interests in more shadowy outline.

"World Diary" contains a useful chronology of five years of imbecility and misery. Inevitably the book gathers a power and horror of its own. The reader, passing quickly through the jungle of world politics, may well wonder what we are all sitting and waiting for; or if the population of this planet, especially of its western hemisphere, does not consist of yahoos rather than men. These have been five dark, lean years, which I have heard historians liken exactly to phases of the decline of the Roman Empire; also to the simultaneous birth of early Christianity, with its sufferings, its incipient hope and new energy.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

Stieglitz, Done by Mirrors

America and Alfred Stieglitz, by Waldo Frank, Lewis Mumford, Dorothy Norman, Paul Rosenfeld, Harold Rugg and Others. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 347 pages and 120 illustrations. $3.50.

FOR MANY years we have been waiting for a well documented record of the amazing life and work of Alfred Stieglitz who, in the seventy-first year of his hoary youth, is still at work with his camera. With an unbroken spirit and challenging vigor he still stands in the middle of his luminous gallery, and talks. Many of us have been impressed with the persistency of his repetitions, many others for the first time hear a voice and a message that is singular today. With his bush of yellowish-white hair, his burning eyes, his dramatic gestures and fanatic persuasion, and with his unswerving insistence upon the integrity and purity of artistic expression against a growing commercialism and prostitution in art and culture today, it is no wonder that this powerful man proves to be spell-binding and irritating, clarifying and confusing at the same time.

Although the portrait in "America and Alfred Stieglitz" is not complete, this handsome volume nevertheless presents a picture no student of the cultural and artistic growth of this country can afford to overlook. All of the articles in the book stand by themselves, although many of them are the close complements of others. Paul Rosenfeld's beautifully written account of "The Boy in the Darkroom," Herbert Seligman's broad canvas of the "291" and the Intimate Galleries, are brought to a climax with Dorothy Norman's intuitive grasp of "An American Place." There is also a series of important articles on photography (R. Child Bayley, Paul Strand, Evelyn Scott); and Ralph Flint's intense study of post-Impressionism gives us in compact form what we have been looking for in many an art book. The three poems by Marin, Dove and Demuth have a ring of sincerity and genuineness, suggesting a relationship that has no equal among art dealers and painters. Jenning Tofel's Portrait is a small masterpiece with its insight and concreteness; Harold Clurman's "Stieglitz and the Group Idea" will have full meaning to many of us who have been watching the expanding germ of a new theatre in America; and Gertrude Stein's last-minute contribution is astonishing for its clarity and preciseness. The book ends

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ing picture of "The Hill" house in Lake George where Stieglitz spends his summers, and Sherwood Anderson's "City Plowman"—a queer blend of Anderson and Stieglitz.

But save for Paul Rosenfeld's excellent though sketchy essay there is not one full-grown biographical portrait of Stieglitz in this whole book about him. There is no attempt to estimate his influence upon photography and the advertising and news photographers of today. And certainly there should have been some report on the rise of commercial galleries and benevolent museums that followed Stieglitz' introduction of Europe's greatest artists to this country, at a time when money making was a he-man's sole aim and art was restricted to afternoon teas.

Instead we find an ambitious though introspective mosaic of *the* American Background by William Carlos Williams, dragging in Stieglitz only at the last minute; a delicate picture of last century's city life and a treatise on the sex life of our decade that Lewis Mumford has not been able to tie up with the subject matter of the book; and Waldo Frank calling upon Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Paul of Tarsus and even Marx to stand by for a trapeze act that tries to make Stieglitz into a "thesis, antithesis and synthesis."

Although the virtues of the book are large enough easily to outweigh most of its shortcomings (it would be valuable for the appendix and its many illustrations alone), there is still a fundamental defect left to comment on. The editors have chosen to drown Stieglitz in a turbulent ocean of their own innermost feeling and metaphysical nebulae. From a fascinating reality, documented in a wealth of anecdotes revealing his humaneness, logic and invigorating sense of humor, they have escaped into obscure symbolisms shrouded in a vocabulary fit for liturgical services. They must assume full responsibility today for even more firmly establishing Stieglitz as a myth and obscuring the work of a man whose greatest assets have been the simplicity of his life, the clarity and directness of his creative vision.

FRED J. RINGEL.

The Cycle of Revolt

A Decade of Revolution: 1789-1799, by Crane Brinton. New York: Harper and Brothers. 341 pages. $3.75.

Reaction and Revolution: 1814-1832, by Frederick B. Artz. New York: Harper and Brothers. 330 pages. $3.75.

IF ANYONE wishes to learn how the spirit of fanaticism migrated from the body religious to the body politic, he must needs study the French Revolution. And he could find no better presentation of such a theme than in the book of Professor Crane Brinton. "A Decade of Revolution" is not a detailed narrative history of the French Revolution, but a series of essays on its many aspects. It is the work of a thorough scholar in the field who, in addition, has the alertness of the intellectual who is aware of his world. The book is original in its intepretation and is written in a style that is piquant and provocative.

According to Professor Brinton, the French Revolution, in its entirety, was motivated by ideals and passions that were, in the deepest sense, religious in character. The dogmatism of the revolutionists, their longing for martyrdom, their lack of humor, their intolerance, their division of mankind into the saved and the damned, were all "unmistakable signs of the theological temperament." The Jacobins, in their zeal for a democratic republic, fully and [illegible] Revolution. Only in considering the religious aspect, according to Professor Brinton, can their political theories be at all understood. Terrorism, to the Jacobins, was only a "transition stage" to a classless paradise in which would reign Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. As the French Revolution was a new religion, there was no room in it for moderates. Even the so-called moderates, the constitutional monarchists, were touched with religiosity. They had, "if not the crazily aspiring touch of the true fanatic, at least the steady yet curiously unreliable hand of the doctrinaire." From this point of view the Reign of Terror was not an unexpected interlude, but a logical manifestation of the transition from the moderates of 1789 to the extremists of 1793. Jacobinism continued to be the political religion of the French, though with diminishing fervor, until the advent of the Third Republic. It made its "compromise with the flesh," and now gives "few of the routine consolations even an inactive religion should provide."

Curiously enough this first-class religion was preached by second-class revivalists. In the opinion of the author, Danton was a grafter, Marat a man of "diseased emotions" and Robespierre himself only a front for the Committee of Public Safety. How then is one to account for their remarkable success? It was due, according to Professor Brinton, to the luck of the revolutionists, to the stupidity of the opposition and to the rivalries of the powers who, for a time, were more eager to advance their special interests than to unite against their common enemy. The author does not take into sufficient account the terrific impact of the new forces of nationalism, now for the first time completely integrated and set loose by the French Revolution.

In the same series Professor Frederick B. Artz treats the period of the Restoration. If his volume has not the merits of that of Professor Brinton, it has merits of its own. It is a "new history" in that it is a topical treatment of the social, political, economic and cultural aspects of European history during a short but significant era. Much of the book goes over familiar ground, but the facts are put in convenient form by the author; therefore the book is useful both to general readers and college students.

If the book of Professor Artz can be said to have a leading theme, it is the struggle that began after Waterloo between the restored monarchical-aristocratic order and the industrial middle and working classes, who were inspired by the principles of the French Revolution. The reactionaries and the liberals, as the two parties were called, struggled for control in every country in western Europe. Liberalism made a great appeal to the rising generation, which enthusiastically espoused its leading ideas—laissez-faire, parliamentarianism, secular education and nationalism. The reactionaries tried to cope with the growing menace by warming over the now rather cold fanaticism of religion. This gave rise to the issue of clericalism versus anti-clericalism that continued to distract Europe all during the nineteenth century.

Liberalism emerged victorious from the revolutionary movement of 1830 on the Continent, and from the Reform bill of 1832 in England. The middle classes, who were the chief beneficiaries of this victory, were themselves not fully aware of the real significance of their achievement. They regarded it as a "finality," whereas it was but the beginning of a new—and far more serious—conflict, as between themselves and their erstwhile allies, the working class.

These volumes are the first to appear of a series, "The Rise of Modern Europe," as edited by William L. Langer, who is to be congratulated on beginning with two such excellent books.

J. SALWYN SCHAPIRO.

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Island of the Doomed

Pitcairn's Island, by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

THE THIRD and final novel in the series Nordhoff and Hall have been writing from the materials of the old "Bounty" case is more exciting to me than the first book, which treated the mutiny in a complete, general way. And it is more rangy than, though not so intense and well done as, "Men Against the Sea," which was the story of that terrible voyage of Captain Bligh's in the open boat. It is the novel that starts with Fletcher Christian, the chief mutineer, as he sailed off in the "Bounty," taking eight of his original crew and eighteen natives to an almost unknown island in the Pacific. He burned the "Bounty" there in the cove, and settled on the rich land, breeding pigs and chickens, keeping the day of the month in his calendar. That all started in 1789. In 1807, when the first ship dropped anchor in the cove, there was discovered a thriving Christian community of native women, some two score agile youngsters, half white, and only one grown man to tell the story. Alexander Smith had worked with the others through the first orderly period of settlement, had seen the trouble with the native men start, the massacre by them of most of the Whites, the murder of the remaining Tahitian men by the Tahitian women, and the final debauch of the Whites, starting on island brew and lasting several years. Smith survived that last nightmare period in company with Young, who taught him to read and died soon of sickness, and with great mad Quintal, whom finally he had to stalk down and kill, with an axe. And so he was found there, sitting every night in the strange air, reading them stories with his dim eyes out of the Bible.

If the Whites had all been like him, and Young, and Christian, there would probably have been no serious trouble, for their society was economically of the golden age. But this majority handful of poor brutes, having no experience of living outside of the iron rule of the foc'sle and brawls with waterfront tarts ashore—impossible they should not, when suddenly turned loose into a democratic utopia, go to pieces and destroy themselves, and all else within range. Implicitly the story is one of the most vivid and incredible of history; and Nordhoff and Hall have constructed it with great skill and patience. But in the end, they seem to lack somewhat the sense of this self-generated doom that should hang over the thing from the start, raising its violence and horror to a deserved level of tragedy.

OTIS FERGUSON.

The Path of Glory

Veterans on the March, by Jack Douglas. Foreword by John Dos Passos. New York: Workers' Library Publishers. 400 pages. $1.25.

THIS STORY of the marches of World War veterans upon the national capital in 1932-33-34 is a much needed corrective to the falsehood and misinterpretation that have flooded the country during the past two years. Mr. Douglas first shows us the origin of these largely spontaneous marches. The veterans were going to Washington to demand some requital for fifteen years of "maladjustment, economic insecurity, betrayal of the promises made them when they went to war." Then he takes us to sources of the rivulets of marchers, forming in all parts of the nation. We get to know many of the veterans by name. We watch them forage and requisition transportation; we see them beset by police and railroad guards and sometimes defended by the inhabitants. The rivulets merge with others and make large streams, and we are aware that the same thing is happening in forty-eight states. The streams of vets pour into the mudflats outside Washington, D. C. They build their shelters on the Anacostia flats; they live there in poverty and misery. We see clearly how the police, the civil and military authorities conspire to keep the marchers under control, with friendship in one hand and a knife in the other. On Bloody Thursday General MacArthur, with the consent of the authorities, cracks down on the veterans. In 1917 and 1918, nothing was too good for this, the Flower of Our Youth; in 1932 only machine guns, gas, bayonets and tanks are good enough for them, their babies and their wives. The story would be fascinating if it were only fiction: as truth it is tragic.

But the dispersal of the bonus army was not a complete defeat. In addition to having won the right to borrow on their back-pay certificates, the veterans, many of them, had become conscious of their position in society as workers and farmers. The only possible criticism of Mr. Douglas' book is that it does not give enough attention to the rank-and-file revolts in the established veterans' organizations, and the possibilities for opposition work from within. Granting that the leadership of these groups is at present reactionary, one still has to admit that the great bulk of organized veterans are within them. That the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League, which Mr. Douglas supports, has honest and militant leadership, membership and program, does not alter the fact that if you want to milk a cow you have got to go where the cow is.

WALTER WILSON.

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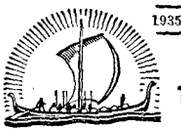

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Notes on Poetry

Not Mine to Finish, by Genevieve Taggard. New York: Harper and Brothers. 93 pages. $2.

WHERE Miss Taggard keeps to short forms her poems often become genuine idioms—that is, have meaning and being beyond the verbal and logical values of the lines—and are fresh, compact and self-contained. It is in this sense that the creation of idioms may be called the willful object of poetry. Her work has the further virtue that its subject matter represents the problems of a living, growing sensibility; there is a constant sense of history and place in terms of a specific vital interest. In brief, in her successes such as "Try Tropic," "Return of the Native," "Image," "Detail" and "The Trance," she imposes on her material the authority of the short form and the persuasiveness of an impersonal style. Yet in the twenty-six pages of her most interesting poem, "Evening Love-of-Self," the same craft representing the same sensibility produces a work of which the parts seem itemized, violent and centrifugal, and of which the style seems often personal in the bad sense. The reader cannot keep the poem in mind because it was composed in a form conceived with inadequate authority; it is, in fact, like most long poems, an arrangement of outbursts rather than a composition. The fault is not entirely Miss Taggard's. It is the radical fault, rather, of the literary habit of mind that thinks of any long poem that is neither dramatic nor narrative as if it were merely a succession of short poems; and the faults of habit are surely the worst.

R. P. BLACKMUR.

Atlantides, by Haniel Long. Santa Fé, New Mexico: Writers' Editions. 87 pages. $2.

Daemon in the Rock, by Edwin Richardson Frost. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 70 pages. $1.50.

Few if any present-day American poets could surpass the range of lyrical effect that Mr. Long shows in this volume. He tackles every possible form known to English verse, from the seventeenth-century echo of "Butterflies," through Heine-like song, Parnassian sonnet, down to Rupert Brooke ("Pool in the Desert"), Robert Frost, the Imagists and, finally, in "Cobweb," something like the palimpsest-technique invented by Ezra Pound. And all this range of effect, rich and dazzling, is used to illuminate a theme no male American poet, except Mr. Long, has dared to attack—the theme of sexual love. As a set of studied variations on this theme, ranging from accomplishment to despair, and not indulging in the self-pity by the way that seems to haunt our women poets, this book is noteworthy. To say that it happens to be the best book of American poetry I have seen in a year is an understatement. It is also, and in its own right, a permanent addition to the best American poetry that has appeared these last twenty years.

Only a Macaulay, writing on a Robert Montgomery, could do justice to "Daemon in the Rock." Here is lame and halting rhythm, lines strangled in adjectives, preposterously comic inversions, meaning tortured for the sake of the paltriest of rhymes. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, Browning, Swinburne, Arnold or Thomas Hardy never existed for this poet. He remains happily tone-deaf and color blind. That he clutters his verse with all the academic baggage possible goes without saying. Without it, he would have nothing to say. In his introduction, Mr. John Crowe Ransom says that he does not think it necessary to argue why this book is poetry. It is certainly

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not necessary to argue about it, since to anyone who has either read or appreciated poetry, it is obvious that the kind Mr. Frost writes is both pretentious and childish, and at bottom execrably bad.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

Riders of the Sky, by Leighton Brewer. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 163 pages. $2.50.

"Riders of the Sky" is a narrative poem of some importance not because of any merit in the verse itself, but by reason of its interest as a story of the Great War. Leighton Brewer was an aviator in the American Flying Service—an experience that has inspired this rather glory-ridden poem. That others have found accounts of the technically beautiful killings of Guynemer and Richthofen a trifle boring after miles of print and scores of lectures, should concern us little here: this is a good story, in the way that "Death in the Afternoon" is a good story. Killing bulls as an expression of colossal boredom is one thing; the legal murder of human beings another. The book is a vivid picture of men at war; as a story of blood and punctured lungs it must stand. KENNETH PATCHEN.

Modern Things: An Anthology, edited by Parker Tyler. New York: The Galleon Press. 92 pages. $2.

Distributed among the other poems of this anthology are authentic pieces by Pound, Stein, Cummings, Stevens, Moore and Williams, who have in the past been the tent-poles sustaining the thin canvas of many a poetical one-night circus. For this reason their work here published must be separated from that of the latest of their followers, of whom Lionel Abel, Ellsworth Larsson and Harold Rosenburg are the most capable. If this volume is to be taken as significant of the state of what we still are apt to know as modern poetry, it is possible to say that its authors have succeeded in narrowing down their public until it consists of few more than one another. Their most pronounced characteristic is an excessively self-cultivated fragility that shivers in the shadow of our middle-aged American laurel trees, through which more robust winds are now beginning to blow. JAMES NEUGASS.

A Tearless Glass: With a Preface on the Art of Poetry, by Louis Grudin. New York: Covici, Friede. 94 pages. $2.

Eighteen poems are here preceded by a twenty-four-page essay on "Poetry and Causal Symbolism," in which definitions are supplied on "The Poet's Claims," "Poetry and 'Life,'" "A 'Materialistic' Esthetic," etc. "The incorruptibility of art," says Mr. Grudin, "is simply a case of the integrity of the laboratory," and the defects in his own verse must be charged not to the laboratory's dishonesty but to its too elaborate machinery and to the fact that some of its equipment and purposes are slightly obsolete. An intent and curious intelligence is apparent, and the best poems, though overcharged with the consciousness of theory, are subtly nerved and at times grotesquely sensitive. But the preface remains the reader's chief interest. One statement in it should, if taken literally, be an aid in present poetic combat: "The social utility of art, as it is popularly conceived—like the familiar usage of such words as love, life, beauty, reality—is a fog in which mediocrity finds a deceptive refuge." Another statement—"This mystery and awe with which poetical claims are regarded must be cleared away if we are to regain an intelligible view of poetry"—makes Mr. Grudin's verse no exception to the dogmatic severity with which he introduces it, and shows it to be the work of a serious [illegible]

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Books in Brief

A Guide to Modern Politics, by G. D. H. Cole and Margaret Cole. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 480 pages. $3.

THIS seems to have been written for that large class of people who are unable to find their own way through the maze and the turmoil of post-war changes in the internal structure of the Powers. To them it can be cordially recommended as a competent and reliable guide. According to their own statement, the standpoint of the authors is that of international socialism; it may also be described as moderately Marxian. It gives a vast amount of information, but does not undertake to predict the lines of future development. As between communism and fascism, the authors' sympathies are of course with the former; nevertheless they write of the fascist states as though they were destined to endure, and credit them with a larger achievement in social organization than can be shown in actual fact, as distinguished from plans on paper. In their eagerness to avoid bias and partisanship, they are inclined to bend backwards. H. S.

The Lonely Lady of Dulwich, by Maurice Baring. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

Zita Mostyn, a model of beauty and passivity, marries Robert Harmer, an English turfman, no less. Much, much neglect. In Paris, Jean de Bosis, youthful poet, bids for her affections. A return to England kills this budding romance, but as Harmer's toy grows older she makes a last feeble grasp for romance in the person of Walter Price, American gossip journalist. He is distinctly not that way about her, so she starts in being lonely. Thrown into this mélange for atmosphere are scads of the verra, verra rich who are always taking the waters here and there. Occasionally someone cracks a third-rate epigram. P. S.

Contributors

CHARLES A. BEARD, who sometimes describes himself as a Connecticut farmer, is the author of various books, the most recent of which is "The Open Door at Home."

WAYNE MCMILLEN teaches in the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago and served for a year as field representative for the Southwestern states under the first federal relief act.

C. W. WHITTEMORE, for ten years publicity director for the Boston Chamber of Commerce, is the author of "Pipe Down, Sailor" and has contributed to various magazines.

CAROL PAXSON writes us: "I should like to be described simply as doing graduate work in economics. If antecedents are absolutely essential, I have been a hack writer (educational books) and also a research assistant in penology."

CONRAD AIKEN, a Pulitzer prize-winner in poetry, is also the author of several novels and books of short stories, the most recent of which was "Among the Lost People."

JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY is the author of "Plastic Redirections in Twentieth Century Painting." He has contributed to various journals devoted to art.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON, the author, among other books, of "The Robber Barons," is spending the winter in New York.

FRED J. RINGEL, the editor of the symposium, "America as Americans See It," is a European journalist now living in New York City. He is working at present on a survey of the arts in America.

J. SALWYN SCHAPIRO, a professor of History at the College of the City of New York, is the author of "Condorcet and the Rise of Liberalism," recently published.

WALTER WILSON has been working for two years on a book to be called "The Unknown Soldier," the story of the common soldier in America's wars.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Herman Simpson and Philip Stalk.

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